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Babylon: A Spiritual Journey Through Time and Nations

By
Corporate Prayer Resources



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PREFACE

We live in the ruins of an ancient civilization that once covered the whole earth. The people of this civilization populated the world, and spread their religion and world view to all the nations.

The ruins of their temples remain as places of brooding mystery for us today. The Pyramids, Stonehenge, New Grange, Angkor Wat, Teotihuacan, Chitzen Itza, the Nazca Lines, and many other places remind us of the power this ancient civilization once exercised.

We still use their calendar. Our holidays were their holidays. Theirs was the root of our languages, and we still use the alphabet they developed to express those languages. Their achievements were many, but their civilization suffered from a tragic flaw that brought about its downfall.

For the ancients once knew the one true God, but they abandoned His worship for a man-made religion which left them in slavery to their kings and priests. This dark side of their legacy produced superstition, oppression, warfare, and slavery—leading to the ultimate expression of religious evil—human sacrifice. They became the great enemies of God’s plan of redemption, waging war on Israel, crucifying the Christ, and persecuting the Church.

It was in the midst of the persecution of His Church that God decreed the downfall of this evil civilization. The message from God was delivered to John, the last surviving disciple of Christ, in a vision.

And in John’s vision, God gave this evil civilization the name that has resonated down through the ages.

God called it *Babylon*.

This book will take you on a spiritual journey back in time to understand the false religion of Babylon.

Then you will follow Babylon through the nations to understand the spiritual strongholds set in place to dominate the nations and peoples throughout history.

At the same time you will see how God has set His redemptive plan in motion through the ages to set His people free.

Finally, you will learn how to overcome the strongholds of Babylon in your own life so you can complete your own spiritual journey.

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” Ephesians 6:12

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4

It is our hope that you will use your knowledge and freedom from the doomed Babylonian System to pray for those still trapped and lead many out of Babylon.

PART ONE: BEFORE BABYLON

“I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Genesis 3:15

Chapter 1

The Spiritual Journey

“I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. This title was written on her forehead:

Mystery,
Babylon the Great
The Mother of Prostitutes
And of the Abominations of the Earth”
Revelation 17:3-5

So began the vision of Babylon given to John, a prisoner of the Babylonian System, whose rise and fall he recorded in the book of Revelation. For nearly two thousand years the name Babylon has been recognized by Christians as a symbol of a wicked and perverse world system, which persecutes on the one hand and entices on the other.(1)

Babylon was the first great city of the world. It was there that the Tower of Babel was built, and from there that humanity dispersed after God confused their languages. The World System was born in Babylon.

The city of Babylon was the richest and most powerful city in the world for two thousand years. It was the king of Babylon who destroyed Solomon’s Temple and it was to Babylon that the exiles from Jerusalem were taken. Yet at the height of its power, the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah pronounced God’s judgment on the city:

“A drought on her waters They will dry up, for it is a land of idols, idols that will go mad with terror, so desert creatures and hyenas will live there, and there the owl will dwell. It will never again be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation.”

Jeremiah 50:38,39

By the time John received his vision, some seven centuries later, Babylon had become a desert backwater.(2) No one even knew when the last Babylonian fled from the cursed city. It had vanished into the desert, just as God’s prophets had said.

However, the World System spawned by Babylon reached its zenith as John was writing the book of Revelation. The whole world was dominated by the Babylonian System, with only a few Christians and exiled Jews standing in its way. But Babylon was not to triumph.

The vision God gave to John was a spiritual journey through time and the nations in just a few images:

A prostitute religion that rules kings and people.
Seven great kings whom she rules.
Ten kings who remove her power.
An eighth king who destroys her just prior to the second coming of Christ.

Yet, within these few images, God has given us an amazingly accurate picture, not only of Babylon, but of the history of the whole world. The vision, part history and part prophecy, was given to reveal the Mystery of Babylon to God's children, so that we could come out of Babylon and be free.

For Babylon is still here with us today.

And, yes, Babylon is still powerful today.

But to understand the Mystery of Babylon for today and tomorrow, we must first journey back in time to the Babylon of yesterday.

Chapter 2

DIGGING UP THE PAST

Up until the Nineteenth Century, the only information about Babylon and the ancient world came from the Bible and the ancient writings which survived the collapse of the Roman Empire. But, beginning with Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1798, scholars began to dig up the buried remains of ancient societies.(1) The science of archeology was born, and by the 1840's, Babylon itself was being excavated.(2)

Unfortunately, the Nineteenth Century also saw the triumph of Secularism, with its anti-theistic worldview. The theory of evolution gained wide acceptance as a "scientific" alternative to theistic creation. Scientists decided that the Bible was just another collection of myths, and anyone who argued otherwise was systematically excluded from the academic community.

The effect of the anti-Biblical bias in the study of ancient history was profound. The Biblical story of Noah's catastrophe which destroyed the ancient world, a story which was repeated in Babylon and hundreds of cultures around the world (3), was simply denied, along with the vast body of evidence remaining from the catastrophe. People who believed that humanity originated in a single location, as the Bible teaches, were labeled as "diffusionists" and condemned as teachers of a theory which contradicted the evolutionary model. Evidence of cross-cultural influence was condemned as "racist," and numerous theories were proposed to try to explain away inconvenient facts such as the widespread diffusion of The Flood story (4). As our knowledge expanded, so did our confusion.

But the foundations of Nineteenth Century science, with its confident rejection of the Creator God and the Bible He wrote, have crumbled in the face of Twentieth Century scientific discoveries. The creation of the universe out of nothing, a key Biblical teaching, is now generally accepted by astronomers as the "Big Bang" theory (5). The discovery of complex DNA in all living cells has proven that life could not randomly arise from chemical reactions, leaving evolutionists without a scientific mechanism to support their theory (6). Geneticists have proven that all humans come from one female ancestor (7), just as the Bible says. Linguists have shown that all human language groups share a core of related words (8), indicating a common origin as taught by Scripture. And despite a worldwide search, historians have never pushed the boundaries of history back any earlier than the Babylonian civilization, which the Bible shows to be the oldest civilization on Earth.

Despite the fact that most of our scholars continue to teach Nineteenth Century Science as if it were still valid, God has made quite a scientific comeback. His book, the Bible, has proven to be remarkably resilient to its critics. Archeologists have dug up Abraham's City of Ur and found

the fallen walls of Jericho. Historians verified that Assyrian and Babylonian kings named in the Bible really existed (9). So, as we enter the Twenty-first Century, we can say that the Bible has been proven to be the best and most accurate ancient history document in existence.

Using the Bible, we can establish an overall framework for ancient history by following the narrative in the Old Testament, beginning with Genesis. We know that God created mankind and placed Adam and Eve in a garden called Eden. Our first parents broke faith with God, and people became so evil that God sent a flood to destroy mankind. However, God had mercy on the righteous man Noah and his family, commanding him to build a gigantic ship to save his family.

Noah and his ark came to rest in the mountains of what is now Eastern Turkey. From there, Noah's descendants moved south to the Plain of Shinar, or Mesopotamia. Once again, the people rejected God, building an idolatrous tower at Babylon and refusing to follow God's command to settle the rest of the Earth. God responded by confusing their language, which caused them to scatter out from Babylon. The nations of the earth can be traced to the families of Noah's sons and grandsons who fled from Babylon.

At this point, the Bible narrative narrows its focus to the ancestry of the Hebrews, beginning with the story of Abraham's move from Mesopotamia to Canaan. The Bible follows Abraham's descendants as they moved to Egypt, ultimately becoming slaves of the Pharaohs. Then arose Moses, the lawgiver and deliverer of Israel, who led God's people out of Egypt. Under Joshua, successor to Moses, the Israelites realized God's promise to Abraham and conquered the Land of Canaan.

After a long period of struggling with enemies within and without, Israel reached its golden age with King David. His son Solomon became the wisest and richest man on Earth and built the great temple to God in Jerusalem. Unfortunately, Solomon's successor was not so wise, and the northern portion of Israel broke away to form a separate kingdom. As the Israelites became more and more disobedient to God, their calamities multiplied. The northern kingdom was destroyed by Assyria, and the people were relocated in other lands. Later, the southern kingdom along with Solomon's beautiful temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, and the people were exiled to Babylon.

This was not the end of the story, though, for God raised up the Persians who conquered Babylon and let the Jews return to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple of God. The last book of the Old Testament was written during this period, but the Bible history continues through the prophecies given about the nations to the prophet Daniel. Two centuries after Daniel lived, when Alexander the Great moved through the Persian Empire toward Jerusalem, the Jews showed him that the prophet Daniel had foretold the Greek Conqueror, and Jerusalem was spared (10).

Thus, the Israelites interacted with all the great empires of the ancient world: Babylon, Egypt, Assyria/Babylon, Persia, and Greece. These, in fact, are the "five kings" which had fallen, which were mentioned in the vision of Babylon recorded by John in the Book of Revelation (Rev.17:10). The "sixth king" which reigned when John had his vision was, of course, Rome, which made its Biblical appearance in the New Testament.

Not only does the Bible contain the most accurate record of ancient history, it also establishes the time line of ancient history. This is done by moving backwards from proven historical dates into the more distant past, where historical records are much less certain. We can start with the date of Solomon's Temple because we know from the correlation between the Biblical king list and other ancient sources that Solomon's Temple was built in 966 B.C. Moving to a passage in I Kings 6:1, we find that the temple was begun 480 years after the

Exodus from Egypt, thus dating the Exodus at 1446 B.C. From Exodus 12:40, we learn that Israel had entered Egypt 430 years before the Exodus, so the date of entry into Egypt is established as 1876 B.C.

Scriptures about the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (Genesis 12:4, 21:5, 25:20, and 47:9) establish a 215-year period between the entry into Egypt and the call of God to Abraham to leave Mesopotamia, dating that event at 2091 B.C. Abraham's genealogy at Genesis 11 establishes a 427-year period prior to Abraham's call as the date of the Flood of Noah, setting that event at 2518 B.C. Lastly, Noah's genealogy at Genesis 5 covers a 1656-year period, providing a date for Adam's creation at 4174 B.C.

Not surprisingly, historians and archaeologists who reject the idea of Biblical creation and The Flood would not agree with the Biblical time line, but their dating systems are based on much more guesswork than they like to admit. Most ancient historical dating systems are based upon a correlation between a fragmentary list of Egyptian kings, a partial list of Babylonian kings, and the one sure ancient historical record, the Bible. Even with their evolutionary bias toward early dating, historians can only claim to stretch the historical data back several hundred years prior to the Biblical flood date of 2518 B.C. (11)

Archeologists, while at a loss to explain the "sudden" appearance of fully developed cultures like Egypt and Babylon, have developed a seemingly scientific method to develop the early dates demanded by evolutionary theory by using Carbon 14 dating. Carbon 14 is formed in the upper atmosphere as cosmic radiation strikes nitrogen atoms, producing the radioactive isotope, Carbon 14. Since the period of time required for half of the unstable Carbon 14 to decay, called half-life, is known to be 5,730 years, one can compare the amount of Carbon 14 present in the organic sample with the expected amount to determine how much has decayed. If the amount of Carbon 14 in the earth was constant from the sample date to the present, the age of the sample can be calculated. (12)

The problem with the method is simply that the amount of Carbon 14 is not constant over time. Modern studies show that the atmospheric content of Carbon 14 is 50% higher than the decay rate, indicating an upper limit of 10,000 years for Carbon 14 formation. One scientist documented 15,000 datings using the more accurate information on atmospheric Carbon 14, drawing the conclusion that a significant number dated from the time of Noah's Flood, and that none were over 7,000 years old. (13)

Thus, an artifact claimed to be 40,000 years old, about the limit for Carbon 14 analysis, is more likely to be about 6,000 years old. Or an American Indian artifact dated at 11,000 years old may in fact be only 3,000 years old. Adjusting the claimed Carbon 14 age for actual Carbon 14 formation rates actually brings these dates into agreement with the results expected using the Biblical time line. We can, therefore, be as confident of Biblical dates as we are of Biblical history when we dig up the past.

Despite their anti-Biblical biases, we owe a great deal to the historians and archeologists who unearthed the ancient world over the past two hundred years. Using the information they have gathered, along with the keys to understanding given in the Bible, we can put together a coherent and reasonable picture of human history.

And the understanding of human history is essential for the understanding of the Babylonian world system.

For the history of Babylon is the history of the world.

Chapter 3

NOAH'S INHERITANCE

Nothing remains of the civilization which existed before the great catastrophe we call the Flood of Noah. Nothing that is, except for Noah's Ark and its contents.

The story of a catastrophic destruction of humanity can be found in over three hundred accounts from cultures on all continents of the globe. (1) Some ninety-five percent of these stories tell of a universal flood. Eighty eight percent say only one family survived, and seventy percent say that the family was saved in a boat. (2) Given the time which has elapsed since the Flood, the correlation between the stories is strong evidence of a historical event.

Even modern scientists are beginning to reevaluate the Flood. It is now generally believed that the ocean levels were as much as four hundred feet lower in the "recent" past. (3) Evidence of sudden inundations has been found in the Persian Gulf, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean. (4) Layers of mud have been found covering ancient cities in Mesopotamia. (5) And while the Evolutionists try to relegate the Flood to a local area, evidence of a worldwide catastrophe continues to accumulate.

The severity of the catastrophe can be imagined from crushed piles of bones and debris found in Alaska, and, indeed, whole islands made of animal bones in the Arctic Ocean. (6) Its suddenness is vividly illustrated by the frozen mammoths of Siberia, perfectly preserved with tropical vegetation in their mouths. (6) The world must have looked awfully bleak to the eight Flood survivors as they left the Ark.

The Ark as described in the Bible was a huge vessel, the size of an ocean liner. Modern shipbuilders have, in fact, imitated the design of the Ark to achieve nautical stability. It could carry the equivalent of seven hundred seventy-seven railroad cars, about double the capacity needed to carry the approximately 80,000 animals calculated by one scientist to have been on the Ark. (7) Certainly, there was adequate room for Noah's family and their inheritance from the Antediluvian world.

The material heritage of Noah's family formed the basis of all the civilizations which followed. We know from the Bible that Antediluvian people domesticated livestock and practiced horticulture (Ge. 4:2). They were adept at metal working (Ge. 4:22), and built cities (Ge. 4:17). Noah himself is described as a "man of the soil" and began farming immediately after the Flood (Ge. 9:20).

Confirming the Biblical record, modern biologists have traced the farming of wheat and other key crops back to a point of origin in the area of Turkey near Mount Ararat where the Ark of Noah settled. Similarly, domestication of sheep, goats, pigs, cows, and horses has been traced back to the same area of southwest Asia. This "package" of agriculture and livestock ultimately spread across Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa, creating the agricultural surplus which propelled the world's greatest cultures. (8)

The level of metal working inherited by Noah's family gave its name to the archaeological description of their time: The Bronze Age. Copper, found abundantly in the mountains near the Ark's resting place, was not strong enough in its pure form to be useful in tools or weapons. However, the addition of tin, a much rarer metal, formed bronze, which greatly increased copper's strength. (9) Bronze formed the basis of technology and trade for over 1000 years after the Flood.

Of even greater importance, however, was the spiritual heritage Noah passed on to his children. The creation, the fall of man, Cain and Abel, the Antediluvian genealogies and of course, the Flood story, all came to us through Noah. He knew God as Father and Creator (Ge. 2:7), Spirit (Ge. 1:1), and Redeemer (Ge. 3:15). He made sacrifices to God (Ge. 8:20), following the tradition of Adam's son Abel, anticipating the sacrifices prescribed by The Law of Moses, and ultimately looking forward to the sacrifice of God's own son, Jesus Christ.

It is of utmost importance to understand that ancient people, beginning with Adam, were fully aware of the fact that a Redeemer of humanity, the Christ, was promised. The first mention of Christ in the Bible is in Genesis 3:15, when God pronounced Satan's doom:

“I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head and you shall bruise his heel.”

The concept of the “Seed of Woman” is itself quite unusual, because children then, as now, were accounted for as “seeds” of their fathers. Looking back, we can understand how the “Seed of Woman” came from a young virgin named Mary, who's Son Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Yet, the concept of a virgin bearing a child of God is a very widespread motif of the ancient world, found from Greece to the land of the Mayans. (10) These stories will be covered in greater detail in the study of Babylon, because the perversion of the Seed of Woman promise is a key to understanding the Babylonian System.

The “Seed of Woman” was to be “bruised” in the heel by Satan. This statement prefigures Christ's death on the cross, when a nail was literally driven through His heel. As with the “virgin birth”, the “dying God” is a widely spread myth of the ancient world. The birth and resurrection of the “Seed of Woman,” so well attested in mythology, is often related to the winter-to-spring renewal of plant life. Modern scholars, not understanding the real meaning of the “Seed of Woman”, often label these figures as “corn-gods.” (11)

The ultimate triumph of the “Seed of Woman” was pictured as the “crushing” of the serpent's head. We know from Scripture that this triumph is still in the future. Interestingly, under the Babylonian System the serpent was most often revered instead of despised, (14) as Satan achieved his desire to be worshipped.

The story of the “Seed of Woman” who came to bruise the serpent, Satan, was the very foundation of the mythology and beliefs of the ancient world. Somehow it was passed from generation to generation long before Moses wrote the Book of Genesis, but the method of preservation of the story was a mystery until a Nineteenth Century linguist named Frances Rolleston discovered the answer while studying the ancient names of the constellations and stars. In these names, another key to understanding the ancient world was found.

The Bible itself declares that God named the stars (Psalms 147: 4, Isaiah 40:26) and set the constellations in place (Job 38:32). Francis Rolleston and those who followed up on her work discovered that the ancient star and constellation names told the story of the “Seed of Woman.” Star names such as Spica (the “branch” or “seed”) in the constellation Virgo (the Virgin) paint a picture of the promise of the Seed of Woman. Another example can be found in the stars of the constellation Orion, where one star is named Saiph, meaning “Bruised,” and another is named Rigel, “The Foot That Crushes.” (15)

The re-discovery of the true meaning of the stars' names adds a new dimension of meaning to the mysterious passage in Psalm 19:

“The heavens declare the glory of God the skies proclaim the work of his hands day after day they pour forth speech; Night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

Psalms 19:1-4

Indeed, in his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul refers to the above passage as proof that the knowledge of Christ had been fully revealed to the world, (Ro. 10:18). We can actually tell the story of the “Seed of Woman” by following the twelve constellations, or “signs,” which cover the path of the sun, or “zodiac.”

The zodiac story begins with the constellation Virgo, the Virgin, which represents the promise of the “Seed of Woman.” That Virgo is the point of beginning is confirmed in the Egyptian zodiacs of Dendra and Esneh (14) through the mysterious figure of the Sphinx, which had the head of a woman, representing the beginning point at Virgo, and the tail of a lion, representing the ending point in the twelfth sign of Leo the Lion. In the Egyptian zodiacs, the Sphinx was placed between Virgo and Leo, removing any doubt as to its meaning. Not surprisingly, the name of the constellation Virgo in Egyptian is “Ta Repe,” which means “seed of a noblewoman.” (16)

After Virgo, the signs move sequentially through the story of the “Seed of Woman,” leading us to His victory over the serpent. For example, the death and resurrection of Christ is depicted in the sign of Capricorn, a dying scapegoat. Christ’s second coming is pictured in Taurus, the Bull, a symbol of power recognized throughout the ancient world. The final sign, Leo, pictures a lion trampling underfoot a dead serpent, showing the ultimate triumph of the “Seed of Woman” over the serpent.

In addition to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, there are thirty-six other constellations which cover the night sky and add details to the “Seed of Woman” story. The constellation containing the north polar star at the time of the Flood was Draco the Dragon, indicating the serpent’s domination of the ancient world. The brightest, most prominent constellation, Orion, is a picture of the second coming of Christ, with its brightest star Rigel, “The Foot that Crushes,” raised above the serpent. The constellation known to us as the “Big Dipper” is known in Hebrew as “The Assembly,” which is the Greek name for the Church and therefore represents the Church.

The “Star Bible” also attributes symbolic significance to the seven moving celestial bodies which are visible to the human eye, known anciently as “planets.” The sun represents Christ, the Light of the World, while the moon, which reflects the sunlight, represents Christ’s bride, living in His light. Mars, the red planet, represents Christ’s blood, while Mercury, “burned” by its closeness to the sun, is called Lucifer, a name for Satan. Jupiter represents Christ the Suffering Savior, Venus, Christ, the Seed of Woman, and Saturn, Christ, the Ruler. The seven days of the week, a time period recognized around the world, were named for these seven planets. Our very concept of time: days, weeks, months, and years, is in fact founded upon the “seven planets” and the revelation of the “Seed of Woman.” (17)

Yet, even with all of this revelation, the descendents of Noah somehow lost their way. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul tells how this happened:

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.” (Ro. 1:21,22)

The children of Noah squandered their spiritual inheritance when they attempted to replace the living God with “gods” they themselves had created.
Babylon had come.

Part Two: BABYLON COMES

“Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them ‘Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.’”
Genesis 9:1

“As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.”
Genesis 11:2

Chapter 4

BABYLON—THE FIRST KING

Babylon sits in the midst of the Plain of Shinar, a broad plain through which the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers meander on their way to the Persian Gulf. The rivers were prone to violent and unpredictable floods, and often changed course. Rain was scarce and most of the country was desert. The land had no real natural resources other than the mud which was baked into bricks.
(1)

Yet this land became the center of wealth and power in the ancient world. It was the first El Dorado.

The key to Babylon’s wealth was in the land itself. The soil was very rich once it was irrigated. And irrigation must have been well known to Noah and his children, because all agriculture before the flood was accomplished by irrigation (Ge. 2:4-6). To them, the Plain of Shinar must have seemed like home. This explains why the sons of Noah moved south and east from the Ark’s resting place in eastern Turkey to the Plain of Shinar (Ge. 11:2).

At first, the land must have seemed limitless to the small band of people who came from the Flood survivors. After all, only Noah and his three sons and their wives, eight people in all, survived the Flood (Ge. 7:13). Noah’s three sons had sixteen sons (Ge. 10) and, one may presume, an equal number of daughters, for a total of thirty-two grandchildren, which brought the world’s population to forty after the first post-flood generation. If one assumes an average family size of six children, world population would have been just under 4000 in the fifth generation. Using a 30-year average for a generation, this would have happened about 150 years after the Flood, and, with the Biblical Flood date of 2518 B.C., we must date this population milestone at about 2368 B.C.

One can easily visualize four thousand people spread out over the area of southern Mesopotamia, living along the great rivers. Each family would have had more land than could be farmed, with no need for the intensive irrigation system that was to come later. The people would have remained fairly close-knit, although by that time, there would have been a closer relationship to the clan and family than to the whole community.

Now imagine the situation two generations later. At the same rate of growth, world population is now nearly 35,000, almost nine times as many people. Land that seemed limitless to four thousand people would seem cramped to thirty-five thousand, especially when all of the best land had already been taken. Social institutions that worked well with a small population began to crumble under the pressure of explosive population growth. The importance of clans and tribes increased as the ever-expanding population began to lose a sense of family relationship.

At the same time, the agricultural productivity of the land began to produce the “agricultural surplus” upon which civilization depends. In other words, the food needs of all the population could be met by only a portion of the population, leaving the rest free to provide other needs such as manufacture and trade of goods. People began to congregate in villages, towns, and then cities. One of those villages became Babylon.

The rise of cities changed forever the way people related to one another. Scarce resources were concentrated in cities through trade, bringing the balance of economic power to town with them. Because of their resources and trade, cities also drew people looking for opportunity and more excitement than was available through the agricultural life. There was also more leisure time, leading to the creation of cultural amenities of city life, but also allowing for the emergence of sinful lifestyles in the anonymity of city life.

Concentrations of wealth and population led inevitably to the concentration of political power as well. No doubt some central authority was needed to direct the building of the irrigation system upon which the agricultural bounty of Babylon came to be based. However, cities demanded streets and walls and public buildings, along with policemen to keep order and judges to resolve disputes. And it was not too long until someone realized that the steady stream of farm boys to the city provided the raw material for the ultimate expression of power: a military force. Thus, the city could dominate the countryside, and with judicious use of power, the ambitious could dominate the city. The institution of authoritarian rule became a reality, and kingship was born.

The first man identified as a king, as opposed to a family or tribal leader, was Nimrod, a member of the Tribe of Ham and the Family of Cush (Ge. 10:7,8). The first cities of his kingdom were listed as Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh (Ge. 10:10) between Babylon and the Persian Gulf in Shinar, or, as it was called later, Sumeria. Archeologists and historians agree that the cities of Sumeria are the most ancient in the world, the very cradle of human civilization (2).

In Sumerian legends, Nimrod is known by the linguistically similar name of Enmerkar. Since “kar” is the Sumerian word for “hunter,” the vowelless Semitic rendition of the name is “N-M-R” “KAR”, thus “NiMRod, the Hunter” as he is known in Genesis 10:8 (3). According to the Sumerian King list, he was the second ruler of Uruk, Biblical Erech, after the Flood. As a member of the third post-Flood generation, he would have been born about 2428 B.C. and been about 60 when the population explosion began in the fifth generation. By the time of the seventh generation, when population pressure would really begin to mount, he would have been 120, not too extreme an age in a time when his contemporaries still lived many hundreds of years (Ge. 11:12-20).

The Nimrod of Sumerian legend was an ambitious and despotic ruler who gained control of other cities and territories. This would agree with the Biblical description of Nimrod as a great warrior (Ge. 10:8). When the Bible describes him as a mighty hunter “before the Lord” (Ge. 10:9), the meaning is that he hunted against the Lord, and his prey was in all probability other

men (4). He was an iron-fisted ruler who intended to control the Plain of Shinar and, in so doing, he controlled the population of the world.

As the population continued to expand, Nimrod found the Plain of Shinar to be too small for his subjects. By the ninth generation, about 2248 B.C., world population would have made a nine fold increase over the seventh generation population, reaching over 300,000 persons. Nimrod's solution was to find more land by moving northward up the Tigris and Euphrates Valley to the area later called Assyria. It was here that Nimrod built Nineveh and other cities (Ge. 10:11), hoping to remain in control of a burgeoning population.

But even with his fierce reputation as a warrior and a hunter, Nimrod could feel his control slipping away. He had done his best to keep humanity confined to Babylonia, even though he knew that it was God's command that they spread out over all the earth (Ge. 9:7). Indeed, his kingdom was surrounded by unpopulated territory which was luring people ever outward from his control. And he would need something stronger than his army to retain the loyalty of the ever-expanding empire.

It was no longer enough to be king.

He had to become a god.

Chapter 5

THE PROSTITUTE COMES TO BABYLON

The seeds of deception must have been planted long before Nimrod declared himself to be a god.

There is no doubt that the people once knew God. The story of creation, Adam and Eve, the coming "Seed of Woman" and the Flood story constituted their inheritance from Noah. They even called God by name, using "Ellil", and later "Enlil", to refer to the Semitic "El", the Hebrew name for God in the Bible. (1) The name we translate as Jehovah, "Yahweh" in Hebrew, corresponds to the Sumerian "Ea". (2) It is possible that the translation of "Yaweh" as "I Am Who I Am" in Exodus 3:14 could at the same time mean "I Am Ea."

We know that one problem they had was in reconciling God's mercy with his judgment. We find that it was "Enlil", the "El" of The Bible, who was held responsible for sending Noah's Flood. But it was merciful "Ea", or the Biblical Yahweh, who was credited with warning the Babylonian Noah about the coming Flood, much to the displeasure of the condemning god Enlil. (3) The ancient historian Josephus, referring to Hebrew sources, states that it was Nimrod's anger with God's Flood judgment which caused him to rebel and build the famous Tower of Babel. (4)

Even so, it was a long way from disappointment with God to the Tower of Babel. A clue to understanding the process of moving so far away from God is given in the peculiar story of Ham's son Canaan who was cursed by Noah for his father's unrighteous act (Ge. 9:21-27). Canaan was apparently not being brought up to follow the Lord by his careless father Ham, and Ham's failure to train him led to the curse of Canaan, because Canaan's sins would be worse than Ham's. The process of generational loss of godliness was well stated in discussing the events following Joshua's conquests of Canaan:

“After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up who knew nothing of the Lord nor what He had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord” Judges 2:10,11a

Thus, the further away each generation was from Noah’s deliverance through the Flood, the less relationship remained with God. Noah’s sons were happy to let him make the sacrifice and deal with God, while they went about their business. Those who wanted a relationship with God could still have it, and there were righteous men such as Job throughout the ancient world. But most people opted to let someone else deal directly with God on their behalf, hoping to satisfy His demands for righteousness without really changing their lifestyle. This became more and more of a factor as more people moved into the lax moral environment of the cities. Soon, in response to the people’s demand, the new position of priest was created, and institutional religion was born.

Institutional religion throughout history has sought to substitute outward ceremony for inner relationship. (5) With each successive generation, the spiritual heritage of the people grew weaker while the priesthood grew stronger. It was the priests who taught the people that the Father God was split into the “good” Ea and the “evil” Enlil. They also began to draw people away from God through teachings like the one in which the righteous man, Noah, who lived and additional 350 years after the Flood, was said to have been granted immortality by El. (6) Adam and Eve, our first parents, came to be revered by the priests. Adam was storied as the wise man Adapa who lost eternal life and Eve was Ninhursag “Lady of the Mountain”, also known as “the mother of all living” to the Sumerians. (7)

The role of Eve, or Ninhursag, steadily expanded as each generation of priests added another layer of mythology and superstition on top of the Biblical story. In one Sumerian poem, she is given the role of creating humanity from clay under the watchful eye of Ea, who was also known as Enki. In a later story, she was actually married to El and became the mother of several gods including the leading god of Babylon, Marduk. (8) This was the beginning of the cult of the “mother goddess” which was ultimately spread throughout the ancient world.

Thus, by the time of Nimrod’s reign there had been a substantial erosion in the faith passed down by Noah. However, it was Eve’s promise of the birth of the “Seed of Woman” which gave Nimrod the opening he sought to consolidate his position. The “Seed of Woman” was, after all, the great champion of mankind who is pictured as a great warrior in “Star Bible” constellations such as Orion. Who better to claim the title of “Seed of Woman” than the great warrior, Nimrod himself? And, since he had absolute power, and well over 90% of his subjects had never known another king, who could stop him?

To be sure, the effort had to be carefully planned to avoid upsetting the remaining “fundamentalist” believers. Nimrod succeeded by invoking the “Seed of Woman” status on his ancestors, thus making his ancestors and himself appear to be gods. We find, for example, a later historical text which states that Nimrod’s father Cush, or “Meskin-Kash-Er” in Sumerian, was the son of Utu the Sun God. (9) And so, not only was Nimrod a god, his entire dynasty would also share in his divinity. For the “False Seed of Woman” was to be born a king in each succeeding generation, just as Nimrod was born to Cush.

The passing of “divinity” to each generation had to be carefully orchestrated to provide the ceremonial observance which had become the centerpiece of the new institutional religion. Sumerian mythology tells us that Nimrod built a temple district in the city of Erech (Sumerian Uruk) (10) which was known as “E-Ana”, the “House of Heaven”. However, the temple was not

dedicated to God, but was instead dedicated to the mother-goddess Inana, the “Queen of Heaven,” who is also described as the sister of Nimrod, and whose worship Nimrod introduced into Erech. At the ceremony invented for the passing of divinity, the Ritual Marriage, the king would spend the night in the temple with his “sister” Inana or, perhaps, one of her priestesses. The god name given to the king was Dumuzi, (11) which later linguistic changes made into the Tammuz mentioned in the Biblical book of Ezekiel at 8:14.

The temple itself was intended to bring the heaven imagined by the priests to earth, a form of “sympathetic magic” wherein the representation of an object is believed to take on its characteristics. A pyramid-like Ziggurat represented the mountain of the gods, their home in Heaven, and also represented the “World Tree” which was visualized as the passageway connecting the abyss below with this world and Heaven above. At the top of the Ziggurat was a garden which represented the “garden of gods”, the place where the god-king, as Dumuzi, met with his sister-wife Inana. (12) Thus, the temple was believed to be the “House of Heaven,” a place where Heaven and its gods were literally brought down to Earth.

But it was not enough to bring Heaven down to Earth. Nimrod and his priests found ways to take their perversion up to the heavens through the practice of astrology. The story of the “Seed of Woman” in the stars was suppressed and the king’s pantheon of Enlil, Ea, Dumuzi, Inana, and a host of others were set in the stars in place of the original story. Capitalizing on the superstitions and fears which came to characterize the population, the priests exerted control over the people and later over their kings by claiming to be able to interpret destiny from the stars. (13) Ultimately the stars themselves were worshipped as representations of the “gods” which had usurped the beautiful story of the “Star Bible.”

The Prostitute of John’s vision had come to Babylon and the perversion of Noah’s spiritual inheritance had been accomplished. The elements of Babylonian religion were set in place by Nimrod and his priests, but their effect on human history was so enormous that God pictured the Babylonian religion as a Prostitute which controlled the nations of the world (Rev. 17). That control was instituted through a system of religious and political beliefs which worked together to keep people in bondage to their priests and kings.

Although not all elements were present in every instance, we can summarize the characteristics of this worldwide system based upon Babylonian religion as follows:

1. Separation of God and Man

Under the Babylonian System there arose a priesthood or a group of intermediaries who claimed to stand as man’s representatives to God and God’s representatives to man. Because of this claimed special position with God, the priestly class was able to maintain control over the subject population while restricting access to their knowledge and power through initiation and other “mystery religion” practices.

2. False Messiah

The Promise of the “Seed of Woman”, the Savior of the world and our Lord Jesus Christ, was exchanged for a religious view which held that the “Seed of Woman” had already come. Originally the “False Seed of Woman” was a king claiming to be a god, thus instituting the concept of divine kingship.

3. Deification of the Mother of the “Seed of Woman”

As a part of the story explaining the origin of the False “Seed of Woman,” the mother of the False Messiah was given divine qualities to strengthen the claims of divinity made for the False Messiah. Worship of the Mother Goddess was used to strengthen the position of the priests and the god-king.

4. Displacement of God the Father

The role of God the Father is minimized through a variety of mechanisms designed to bring the False Messiah and the Mother Goddess to heightened prominence. In Sumeria, for example, God is split into the “good” God Ea and the “evil” god Enlil, but neither Ea nor Enlil were given the prominence in worship given to the Mother Goddess Inana and the god king Tammuz.

5. Use of Sympathetic Magic to Bring Heaven to Earth

By using earthly replicas of heavenly places, a form of sympathetic magic, priests believed that the heavenly places could be brought to Earth. The building of Ziggurats, seven-level stepped pyramids, representing both the mountain of the gods and the “World Tree” allowing access from the abyss below to heaven above, was the most prominent Sumerian method of bringing Heaven to Earth. The importance of these access points can be seen in the very name of “Babylon,” which means “gateway to the gods.” (14) Another form of sympathetic magic was the making of images which were believed to bring down the spirit of the god, a practice condemned in the Bible as idolatry. (Ex. 20:4).

6. Worship of the Heavenly Bodies

The sun, moon, and stars were brought into the pantheon of gods surrounding the False Messiah and the Mother Goddess. The assumed power of the celestial bodies to determine the destiny of men allowed the priests to exert more control over the subject population and sometimes the kings, through divination and astrology.

Thus, the Babylonian System provided the kings and priests with the political and moral authority to govern, while keeping the people in bondage to them through false belief, superstition, and fear.

By instituting the religion of Babylon, Nimrod thought he had achieved his goal of keeping control of the ever-expanding human population.

But God had other plans for Nimrod and his subjects.

God was coming to Babylon.

Chapter 6

Exodus From Babylon

Judging from the archaeological records, Nimrod did not get very far into his last building project, known to history as the Tower of Babel. For temple towers, called Ziggurats, have been found for the “E-Ana,” or “House of Heaven,” at Erech, and other Sumerian cities like Eridu. (1) But there is little left of the Tower of Babel.

To be sure, the building project planned at Babel must have been massive. Not only were they building a tower “to the Heavens”, which we know means a pyramid like Ziggurat, they

were also building a whole city (Ge. 11:4). Nimrod must have decided to move to Babylon from Erech, a city in southern Babylonia, to better control his kingdom from Babylon's central location. He would have wanted to make Babylon a showcase—and, in a way, he did.

The Bible says that God brought an end to the Tower of Babel by confusing the tongues of the builders so that they could not communicate (Ge. 11:7). For some, the Bible story of the confusion of tongues is harder to believe than the creation story or the Flood, even though Sumerian sources confirm that there was a time when all men spoke the same language. (2) However, a little common experience and a little help from linguistics can help clarify the mystery of the confusion of tongues.

The linguists tell us that all languages change over time. (3) In some cases, like the speech of the teenage culture, changes can occur very rapidly. Other changes, like the ones which make the King James Bible so difficult to read, can take hundreds of years. In addition, isolated populations can produce many language changes, with a good example being the 700 languages spoken on the island of New Guinea. (4) A more germane example would be the division of the Eastern and Western Franks into the French and German languages over a three hundred year period between 500 A.D. and 800 A.D. (5)

If the French and German languages could split under the same Frankish rulers in just 300 years, there is no reason not to believe that substantial linguistic changes were well underway in the 300 years between the Flood and the Tower of Babel. This is not to deny the miraculous power of God to cause linguistic confusion. But surely God knew that Nimrod, by bringing workers from the far ends of the kingdom, would be set up for the confusion which ensued when the people found that they could not communicate.

The spark of confusion must have kindled a flame of rebellion throughout Nimrod's empire. It appears that the tribes of Noah's son, Shem, known as the Semitic peoples, waged warfare against the rule of Nimrod and his relatives in the tribes of Noah's son, Ham. History records the appearance of the Semitic Akkadians as rulers in Northern Babylonia and records that the Akkadians fought and eventually overcame the people occupying Southern Babylonia, where Nimrod's original cities were located. (6)

The Akkadian king who finally overcame the last Sumerian opposition was known as Sargon I. (7) Scribes recorded thirty-four battles which occurred before he gained control of Sumer in southern Babylonia and reached the Persian Gulf Coast. The Bible says that the earth was divided during the lifetime of Peleg, (Ge. 10:25) and many scholars equate this event with the dispersion of the nations after Babel. (8) Peleg died in 2208 B.C., during the tenth generation after the Flood, when world population would have been over 700,000. This time frame fits the historical period attributed to Sargon I. Interestingly, one of the ancestors of Abraham, Peleg's grandson, was named Serug, a Semitic language consonantal match for the S-R-G of SaRGon. Sargon I established his capital at Agade, which was believed to be located within the city of Babylon. Thus, the Semitic victory left them firmly in control of Babylon and the former empire of Nimrod.

The loss of Babylon caused massive upheaval and dispersion in the tribes of Ham who were allied with Nimrod. Both the Bible (Ge. 10:6-20) and the ancient Sumerian King List show no children descended from Nimrod, (9) indicating that Nimrod and his children did not survive the civil war. The great temple at Eridu in Southern Babylonia, the Hamitic homeland, was abandoned and filled with blowing sand, providing archaeological evidence of massive social upheaval. Cush, the father of Nimrod, fled by sea from Southern Babylonia, according to the Sumerian King List. (10) Others, not so fortunate as Cush, fled westward across the desert into

Arabia, Syria, and Egypt. (11) Any who remained in Babylonia would have lost their tribal identity and been forced to assimilate into the Semitic nations.

The situation of the tribes of Noah's third son, Japheth, is much less clear from historical records. We do know that Nimrod subjugated a city called Aratta which was a rich mineral producing center located in the mountains north of Babylonia. (12) The name of Aratta provides a clue to its origin, because the resting place of Noah's Ark was in the "mountains of Ararat" (Ge. 8:4), a mountainous region bearing virtually the same name. This region, then, would have been the home base of humanity prior to the move to the Plain of Shinar, and it could be expected that some would have remained behind.

Japheth and his tribes were, in fact, located initially in the mountainous regions of present-day Turkey and Iran to the north of Babylonia. (13) No doubt they would have participated in throwing off Nimrod's yoke at Aratta, but they apparently did not participate in the civil war between the tribes of Ham and Shem. However, after defeating the tribes of Ham, Sargon I turned his attention towards the riches of Aratta, claiming victory "up to the cedar forests and the silver mountains." (14) Thus, the tribes of Japheth were forced to withdraw into the mountains and flee outward from Babylon to the north.

So the Lord scattered the families of mankind across the earth (Ge. 11:8), forcing them to "fill the earth" (Ge. 9:1) by using their own sins and pride to make them do what they had refused to do voluntarily. But once the blinders were taken off, people suddenly grasped the potential of a world waiting to be explored, and a frontier which would seemingly never end. The opportunity must have seemed boundless.

Some families of people opted for the quickest and easiest way into the wilderness, abandoning the agricultural lifestyle of Babylonia to live off the land by hunting game and gathering wild fruits and vegetables. Not only was this the freest form of existence, it also involved far less work than farming (15) and so must have seemed very attractive. The hunter-gatherers, moving across land by foot and across sea by boat, rapidly reached the ends of the Earth in pursuit of game and freedom. The American Indians, Basques of Europe, Bushmen and Pygmies of Africa, and the Aborigines of Australia all descended from the pioneering hunter-gatherers.

However, the free and easy lifestyle of the hunter-gatherers had a huge downside. Since they were constantly on the move, there was no time to wait for crops to mature, and so the people lost the skills of agriculture. Similarly, they lost the art of metalworking and reverted to tools of wood, bone, and stone. Ultimately they lost the arts of civilization, entering the "stone age" from which some have not emerged to this day. And, since an agricultural community can feed about fifty times more people in the same area, hunter-gatherers were doomed to be driven into the marginal lands like deserts or jungles, or overwhelmed and assimilated into the farming civilizations, when the farmers finally came.

Between the hunters and the farmers were the herdsmen, who left the sedentary and toilsome life of farming to move with their domestic livestock. They retained varying amounts of agricultural and metal working skill, but lived a rougher life than the farming civilization people and came to be called "barbarians" by the Greeks for their crudeness. (17) Another example of the farmers' low regard for herdsmen would be the disdain the Egyptians felt toward the Hebrew herdsmen of Jacob. (Ge. 46:34).

The barbarian herdsmen had much more contact with the farming civilizations than did the hunter-gatherers. They could not support population density comparable to the farmers, and thus settled on lands bordering on the agricultural regions. The barbarian peoples originally occupied

Arabia, and the mountains north of Babylon, and from there spilled out into the steppe grasslands which stretched from Hungary to Mongolia. (18) They alternatively traded with and warred against the farmers, and their role in history, as will be seen later, is pivotal.

The spread of farming civilization throughout the world was somewhat slower than the dispersion of hunters and herdsmen because of the sedentary nature of farming. Once settled, however, lands taken by farmers were usually retained because of the higher densities of farming populations. The Nile River valley in Egypt, being very similar to Babylonia in its conditions, was of course quickly occupied by the Hamitic tribes fleeing Babylon. The Indus River Valley, not far to the east of Babylon, was colonized soon afterward by the Dravidian speaking dark-skinned Semitic tribes of Elam. (19) One of the tribes of Japeth imported Babylonian wheat to the eastern end of the Eurasian steppe and began Chinese civilization. The Chinese later learned to domesticate rice, allowing agriculture to expand into the tropical areas of southern Asia where wheat could not be grown. (20)

The agricultural surplus generated by the farming civilizations produced the same effects of wealth, trade, and power as was found in Babylonia. This fueled the expansion of farming civilizations as they explored the world to find trade goods such as precious metals or jewels, established trading outposts to service the trade, and founded colonies to secure their trade. Early European settlements in Cornwall, England, western Spain, and the lower Danube appear to have arisen in connection with mining efforts for tin, silver, and copper. (21) Similarly, mineral exploration may have been responsible for the first settlements on the coast of Southeastern Asia and the islands of the South Pacific. (22) Indeed, it was the colonization process that spread agricultural civilization throughout the world.

Moving as hunters, herdsmen, or farmers, by their tribes and languages, the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japeth finally began to obey God's command to populate the Earth (Ge. 9:7). But the seeds of rebellion that had been planted in Babylon had taken root.

Though they left Babylon behind, they carried it with them in their hearts.
And they recreated it wherever they went.

Part Three: Babylon Covers the Earth

“So the Lord scattered them from there all over the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there, the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”

Genesis 11:8,9

Chapter 7

Egypt: The Second Babylon

To the refugees from Babylon, Egypt must have seemed an ideal place to recreate their homeland. The climate is hot and dry, just like Babylonia, and the life-giving Nile River created a green belt through the desert which was perfectly suited for Babylonian irrigation farming.

Even the swampy Nile Delta was reminiscent of the marshes of lower Babylonia which had surrounded Erech and Eridu, the centers of Nimrod's power.

In ancient times, Egyptians called their land "Kem," or "Black," a name similar to the name of their tribe "Ham." (1) Egypt was known to the Hebrews as Mizriam, a name which means "the two red mud lands" but which was also the name of one of the sons of Ham who must have settled there. (2) The reference to two lands reflects the division of Egypt into Lower Egypt, the Nile Delta, and Upper Egypt, the regions south of the Delta. This division was reflected in Egyptian iconography throughout history, even though it lasted only a short time. The joining of the North and South marked the beginning of Egyptian history, and the story of how the land was united became the underpinning of the New Babylon.

If you had asked the ancient Egyptians how the country came to be, you would have been told of a time when a good king ruled Egypt and, perhaps, the whole world as well. But the good king had a jealous brother who killed the good king and took the throne. However, the good king's wife had a son after he died. The son grew to manhood, recovered his kingdom, and unified the land. (3)

The good king was named "Asar," a name which means "dwelling of the eye." The eye was a symbol of the sun, or "Ra," which was an Egyptian rendition of "Ea." "Asar" originated in the Eastern Nile delta, but his roots go back to Babylonia. For his name is the same as Ashur, the Babylonian god who was a son of Ea, the good god of Babylon. "Asar," or Osiris as he was called by the Greeks, was equivalent to the Babylonian Marduk, or Bel, or Tammuz. (4) He was the god-king of Babylon, Nimrod.

The jealous brother was the Egyptian version of Satan, known as "Set." His evil followers were known as "Sons of Set," an epithet which gives us a clue to the underlying name. (5) Set was really Shem, the brother of Ham. Shem's sons did indeed kill Osiris, or Nimrod, and take his kingdom.

The wife of the good king was "As-T," the "female dwelling," (6) a name which implied motherhood. She was known more popularly as Isis. According to legend, after Osiris had died, Isis caused him to come alive long enough to impregnate her. (7) Thus, through her own action, she became the Mother of the "False Seed of Woman." Isis took the place of Babylonian Inana, becoming the mother goddess of the Egyptians.

The son of Osiris and Isis was Horus, whose name is associated with the sun, "Her" or "Hor." (8) The solar relationship is reminiscent of the claim of Nimrod that his father Cush was a son of the sun goddess as Horus's father Osiris was the son of Ra, the sun god. When Horus challenged his uncle Set, the gods at first gave him only Southern Egypt, leaving Set with the north. After 80 years of conflict, Horus prevailed and was given the whole kingdom. (9) Perhaps this portion of the story reflects an invasion of the Nile Delta Region by the Semites and the ultimate victory of the Hamitic peoples, thus unifying Egypt.

While he lived, the pharaoh of Egypt was Horus, the god-king. When he died, the pharaoh became Osiris, god of the dead. His body was mummified and his spirit was believed to migrate to the stars of Osiris's constellation, Orion. (10) The son of Pharaoh then became Horus, and the rule of the god-king continued.

The first "Horus King" of Southern Egypt was Narmer, a name remarkably similar to Nimrod. (11) An artifact known as the Narmer Palette contains numerous Babylonian symbols such as the symbol for Inana and the bull symbol of the god-king. (12) Another artifact from the same period, the Gebel El-Arak knife, shows the well-known Babylonian motif of a bearded man holding two fierce animals, (13) clearly an icon for Nimrod the Hunter. Archaeologists have

discovered Babylonian pottery, artwork, weapons, jewelry, and burial customs at the earliest site in ancient Egypt. (14) Indeed, even the great Egyptologist, E. A. Wallis Budge admits that Egyptian civilization derived from Babylonia.(15)

In their efforts to recreate Babylon, the Horus kings of Egypt set about to recreate the “E-Ana,” or “House of Heaven” where the power of Heaven was to be magically brought to Earth. The earliest structures were made of mud brick, as in Babylon, and used a niched façade style of architecture identical to Babylonian temple architecture. (16) The most spectacular early temple is the so-called step pyramid of Djoser, a structure which is identical in appearance to a Babylonian ziggurat, and which is surrounded by Babylonian architecture.

Of course, the largest “House of Heaven” ever built, and indeed, the most massive building complex ever constructed, is the temple complex at Giza which contains the Great Pyramid. (18) No ancient structure has provoked more mystery and controversy. Experts cannot agree on who built it, when it was built, how it was built, and why it was built. However, these mysteries can be unraveled with our understanding of the Babylonian origin of Egypt and a little help from science.

The pyramid shape itself is representative of the “Ben-ben” stone, a pyramid-shaped stone which symbolized Heaven, (19) the dwelling place of the gods. A second meaning ascribed to the Ben-ben stone was reproductive, with the stone symbolizing the seed of life. This was especially apparent when the Ben-ben stone was attached to a tall shaft, symbolizing the male reproductive organ, in a structure known as the obelisk. (20) Thus, the pyramid symbolized both Heaven and the seed, and was a favorite Egyptian device to symbolize resurrection of the dead and new life. It was the symbol of the rising of Osiris to the stars and the birth of the new False “Seed of Woman,” the Horus king.

Deep within the Great Pyramid is a chamber, known as the king’s chamber, where the mysteries of Osiris and Horus must have been performed. Access to Heaven for the “Ba,” or spiritual part of the deceased, (21) was provided through tiny shafts which went from the King’s Chamber to the outside. One shaft was aimed at the stars of Orion’s Belt, believed to be the destination of the dead king, who was now Osiris. (22) Indeed, the three pyramids of Giza, including the Great Pyramid, form a pattern which matches the three stars that form the Belt of Orion, the destination of the Horus king. To the east of the pyramids, the Nile River flows in an area which would roughly correspond to the Milky Way’s position in a celestial map. Since the Milky Way was analogous to the Egyptian “Tuat,” or Home of the Dead, the whole landscape scene was believed to represent the heavenly home of the Osiris king. (23)

A second shaft in the king’s chamber was aimed at the then Pole Star, Thuban in the constellation Draco, which was associated by the Egyptians with “MentUret,” the “Great Mooring Post”, a hippopotamus pictured goddess who was a midwife and nurse at the birth of the sun god. (24) Apparently the spirit of “Menturet” descended to assist in the birth of the new Horus king.

A second chamber in the Great Pyramid is called the Queen’s Chamber and must have been devoted to Isis, the mother of the Horus King. (25) This chamber also has two shafts leading to the stars. The first shaft was aimed at Sirius, known to the Egyptians as “Sept,” which was the star of Isis. (26) The second was aimed at a star in Ursa Minor, known to the Egyptians as Upuaut, a jackal god who played a role in the resurrection of the dead. (27)

Another interesting aspect of the shafts from both chambers is their relationship to the sun and the Babylonian sacred number seven. (28) The pyramid itself is constructed based on the ratio of eleven to seven, which is also the ratio of the length of a semicircle (representing

Heaven) to the length of the diameter of a circle (representing Earth). Because of its angle, the southern shaft from the King's Chamber would admit direct sunlight into the chamber on only two days of the year, 52 days before and after the winter solstice. This 52-day period is approximately one seventh of the year. The southern shaft into the Queen's Chamber admits light on only 26 days on either side of the winter solstice, with the total between luminations also approximating one seventh of the year. The winter solstice was associated with the birth of the Seed of Woman in Babylon and throughout many ancient cultures, and specifically with the conception of Horus through the resurrection of Osiris by Isis. (29)

Thus we see that the Great Pyramid was designed and constructed for the purpose of birthing the False Seed of Woman, Horus the god-king, just like the Ziggurats of Babylonia. And the pyramids could have reminded the center of the god-king cult forever had it not been for the precession of the equinoxes. This phenomenon causes the stars, which we think of as fixed, to change positions in the sky as the north pole rotates around a circle in a cycle of about 26,000 years. (30) Within a few centuries, the carefully plotted positions of the shafts were aimed at empty space, and other cult centers replaced the imposing but now useless pyramid.

However bad the precession of the equinoxes may have been for the Egyptian pyramid builders, it does give us a way to date the construction of the pyramid. The shaft aimed at the pole star Thuban was 3 degrees, 34 seconds away from the North Pole when it was built, giving possible dates for construction of approximately 3400 B.C. or 2140 B.C. (31) Calculations based on the positions of other shafts support the later date, (32) and this would make sense because the earlier date is prior to the Flood of Noah. If we date the Tower of Babel and exodus to Egypt during the tenth post Flood generation, 2218 B C, the date of 2140 B C would fall in the twelfth post flood generation, about eighty years after the Tower of Babel. This eighty year period is the same time period assigned to the war between Set (Semites) and Horus (Hamites). Thus, it is possible that the pyramids were built to celebrate the victory of the Horus kings over the tribes of Shem. The Great Pyramid may, therefore, have been begun by the Pharaoh Men (Menes in Greek), who was credited with unifying Egypt.

The fact that tradition credits the Great Pyramid to Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops in Greek), a much later ruler, may hold one clue to how it was built. We know that the pyramid credited to Djoser was built in stages, (33) and that is no reason to doubt that the much larger Great Pyramid was not also built in stages over time, with credit for building going to the pharaoh who finally completed it.

Even so, the Great Pyramid was a massive building project, and modern engineers are at a loss to explain how such a structure could be built using the technology available to the Egyptians. (34) Recently a scientist found the likely answer while examining the limestone blocks of the Great Pyramid, when he discovered that the blocks are actually a quick drying mixture of concrete and crushed limestone. (35) Using wooden molds for the concrete blocks, the labor necessary to complete the Great Pyramid drops from the hundreds of thousands pictured by Egyptologists to about 1400 workers needed over a twenty year period. (36) Thus, the Great Pyramid project would have been well within the capability of the newly unified nation of Egypt, which probably would have been home to about a third of the human race, with a population of nearly one million, by the twelfth generation after the Flood.

Without a doubt, the Great Pyramid was the crowning glory for the second Babylon of Egypt. The huge structure eclipsed anything the Babylonians ever built, and provided the "House of Heaven" so necessary to validate the False Seed of Woman, the "Horus" god-king or Egypt.

But before the Great Pyramid was even started God had begun work on His own plan to bring the real Seed of Woman to Earth. In 2166 B.C. in the Babylonian City of Ur a man named Abram was born, a man whom God would make into a mighty nation, through whom the Seed of Woman would come. (37)

And God would come one day and deal with the Horus king of Egypt. But until He did, Egypt was the greatest nation on Earth.

Yet it was just the first of many great nations born of Babylon.

Chapter 8

Babylon Moves East: India

The first eastward expansion of Babylonian civilization originated in the ancient land of Elam, which bordered Babylon to the east.

Elam was a son of Shem according to the Biblical Table of the Nations (Ge. 10:22). (1) However, the Elamites differed from the other tribes of Shem in two respects. First, they spoke a language from the Dravidian group, as opposed to the Semitic languages of their brethren. (2) Secondly, they were people of black skin color, although their Hamitic neighbors in southern Babylonia were also black-skinned peoples. (3)

It is possible that the blackness of the Elamites indicated considerable intermingling with the black Hamitic tribes that occupied southern Babylonia under Nimrod. (4) It is also very likely that the Elamites allied themselves with Nimrod, because history tells us that Sargon, the Semitic king who defeated the Hamitic peoples, also defeated the Elamites and occupied the eastern portions of their land. However, the Elamite kingdoms were not totally destroyed until about 300 years later, by the son of the great Babylonian King Hammurabi. (5)

The displaced Elamites fled to the east, with some settling in the area of Persia, but most reaching the Indus River Valley. (6) There they found a land much like Babylonia, with the Indus River bringing water through the fertile but arid Indus Valley. (7) As with Babylonia and Egypt, irrigation was necessary for farming and an irrigation system was quickly developed. Soon cities and trade developed, as had occurred in Babylonia, and India became a regular trading partner with Babylonia and Egypt. (8)

Much of the Dravidian Indus civilization remains a mystery because their pictographic writing has not been deciphered. However, numerous statues of the Mother Goddess, the Indian Inana, have been found. In addition, phallic stones, similar in function to the Egyptian obelisk, show the early Indian worship of the False "Seed of Woman." (9) Archaeological evidence indicates that the social structure was tightly controlled, a likely result of authoritarian rulers like the god-kings of Babylon. (10)

But the god-kings of the Indus Valley were no match for the barbarian invaders who swept through the land in the years around 1700 B.C. (11) The invaders were pastoral people, organized by tribes and clans. (12) They called themselves "Aryans", a term which means "nobleman." They utterly destroyed the Dravidians of the Indus Valley, driving those who escaped into the southeastern portion of India. (13)

The Aryan nation had its beginnings in the dispersion of the Tribes of Japeth out of the mountains north of Babylonia and onto the Steppes of modern Russia. There they perfected their pastoral lifestyle, but also learned the skills of mobile hunters and herdsman which, when applied

against other men, made them into fierce warriors. (14) As their numbers grew, they split into several groups, but we are able to trace their migrations because they shared a common language group known today as Indo-European. (15) Some moved west to Europe and others went eastward toward China, but the Aryans turned southward and poured into the Iranian Plateau. One group of Aryans went west from Iran, carrying the name of their war god Indra as far as the Anatolian Hittite Kingdom. The main body of Aryans, however, descended to the fertile Indus Valley. (16)

The smashing success of the Aryans was primarily the result of their mastery of two breakthroughs in military technology. The first was the invention of the war chariot, which vastly increased the speed and mobility of warriors. The second was the composite bow, which allowed charioteers to fire deadly salvos of arrows while remaining out of reach of axe- and spear-carrying enemies. The effects of the two technologies, especially on level plains as in the Indus Valley, were devastating to “conventional” forces. Even a small group of charioteers could destroy a large enemy army, allowing the aggressive invaders to control much larger populations. The Indus Valley civilization of the Dravidians disappeared under successive waves of Aryan invaders. (17)

Yet the barbarian Aryans, while destroying the Babylonian culture of the Dravidians, carried the seeds of Babylon in themselves and so replaced the Babylon they had destroyed with another they created. (18) We find that the Aryans used the same solar and lunar zodiacs as Babylon, and used Babylonian number systems to calculate the past ages of their mythology. (19) They used the Babylonian term “houses of clay” to describe their burials. (20) Their warrior god-king Indra, like the Babylonian Marduk, was the son of the father sky god, (21) and the Aryan god Varuna was identified with the “good” god Ea of Babylon, saving the Indian Noah, Manu, from the Flood. (22)

However, the Aryans had also developed their own customs from the Babylonian base, and they made several innovations to the Babylonian System. (23) The first and most innovative development had to do with the institution of divine kingship which was the political power behind the Babylonian System. Perhaps because of their pastoral social organization, leadership was divided among tribal and clan units (24) so that a single god-king like Nimrod or the Pharaoh of Egypt did not arise for over a thousand years in India. (25) To be sure, the tribal kings were spoken of as gods, and rituals similar to the Egyptian Osiris-Isis-Horus cycle were enacted, (26) but the real power was elsewhere.

It was the priesthood which replaced the weakened kings as the driving force in the Babylonian System in India. (27) They provided the unifying national force, keeping control of religion and ritual. (28) The ultimate result of the ascendancy of the priesthood was the permanent fixing of their dominant position through the Caste System. The Aryan name for the system, “Varna,” reveals its racist feature as well, for the name “Varna,” means “color.” (29)

At the bottom of the Caste System were the people of color, the conquered Dravidian peoples. Their cast of “Shudra” was really no Caste at all, but simply a recognition of their exclusion from Aryan society. (30) In fact, the Aryans were one of the first people using the institution of slavery on a widespread basis, (31) and slavery was the foundation of the Caste System.

Among the Aryans, the lowest Caste was the “Vaishya,” the class of farmers and merchants. Above them was the “Kshatriya,” or warrior class, from whom the leaders and kings were selected. (32) Not surprisingly, the top of the Caste System was occupied by the “Brahmans,” the Caste of the priests. The Brahmans were, in fact, recognized as gods on Earth, (33) and so

we can see that the priestly class of the Aryans was totally successful in their effort to replace the god-king with the god-priest.

In order to successfully usurp the place of the god-king, it was necessary for the priests to expand the “Seed of Woman” concept to include the priesthood. Looking at the Osiris-Isis-Horus cycle as an example of the god-king’s genesis, it can be understood how the priests might have concluded that the child Horus figure was really the same individual as his father, the Osiris figure. (34) An Indian kingship ceremony even called for the king to be ceremonially reborn, (35) as if the husband had conceived himself, to be reborn as the son of his wife. The idea of transmigration of souls, or reincarnation, was developed as the god-priests put themselves in the place of the god-king who became his own son. The resurrection of Osiris and Tammuz, which still faintly echoed the promised resurrection of Christ, was replaced by a hopeless cycle of birth and rebirth.

Of course, the option of being born as a god was only available to the Brahmins. The lower Castes could, if they followed the teachings of the Brahmins, hope that they too would be born as Brahmins in a later reincarnation. (36) Once born, however, the Caste of a person was unchangeable and no improvement was possible in this life. (37) Thus, the lower classes were robbed of even their hope under the reign of the Aryan god-priests. Is it any wonder that the philosopher Buddha, one thousand years later, would conclude that death was the only answer to life’s problems? (38)

Over several centuries, the beliefs of the Aryan god-priests were transformed into the religious system known today as Hinduism. Far from having the great antiquity claimed by its adherents, Hinduism began in the period of the Aryan conquest, when the invaders recorded their beliefs in a series of hymns known as the Rig Vedas. Gradually the gods of the Aryan warriors, exemplified by the warrior god-king Indra, were pushed into the background or, in the case of Indra, made into a parody of a great king. (39) By the tenth century B.C., when the god-priests wrote the Brahmanas, the chief god was the priestly Shiva, god of “righteousness” and teacher of the Brahmins. (40) The doctrine of reincarnation finally reached its fullest development in the Upanishads, which were completed about the time of Buddha in the sixth century B. C. (41)

Buddhism, the other great Indian religion, arose in opposition to the Hindu Caste System (42) and the rule of the Brahmin god-priests. The founder Buddha was also opposed to divine kingship, (43) even though he was a member of the warrior Caste. (44) He did, however, believe in the doctrine of reincarnation, but tried to teach his students to avoid the hopeless cycle of reincarnation by controlling their desires. (45) After the death of Buddha, his teachings swept across India, but the Hindu god-priests gradually reasserted themselves and eventually regained control of India. (46)

So the Buddhist attempt to reform Indian Babylon’s god-kings and god-priests resulted in failure. Buddha’s religion was absorbed back into the Babylonian System, as its philosophical basis degenerated into the worship of Buddha as a benign and compassionate savior by most of his followers. (47)

But the coming of the real Savior, and the real God-Priest, was still several centuries away when Buddha began his doomed challenge to Babylon.

And Babylon continued to grow.

Chapter 9

Babylon Comes to China

At about the same time as the Aryan invaders were overwhelming the Indus Valley civilization, another group of chariot driving barbarians arrived in northern China. There they established the first historical Chinese culture, known as the Shang Dynasty. (1)

Unlike India, archaeologists found no trace of any indigenous civilization existing when the invaders arrived. (2) However, the land was not empty, because Chinese legends tell of driving out hunter-gatherer peoples from the Chinese lands. (3) The Chinese themselves may have been related to the hunter-gatherers, because their language group, Dene-Caucasian, is shared with the Basques of Europe, the Caucasian language group, and the Na-Dene languages of the North American Indians. (4) All of these groups were hunter-gatherer people, later pushed back by farming or pastoral groups.

The Chinese, however, avoided the dead end of hunter-gatherer societies because they retained the knowledge of agriculture. Soon they established an irrigation system in their new land, (5) much like the early settlers of Babylonia, Egypt, and India did. From their contacts with the Indo-European tribes, they learned the art of chariot warfare. (6) Armed with a potent military and supported by an agricultural surplus from the fertile land, (7) the Chinese rebuilt Babylon in the Far East.

For, while westerners do not tend to connect the Chinese people with the Middle East, Chinese traditions make it clear that they migrated to China from there. They left Babylonia and moved through Persia, reaching the land of Khotan, in Eastern Turkestan. (8) Perhaps their contact with the Indo-European Steppe peoples occurred there, and, if so, they may have been driven eastward to China by the migrating Aryans. Interestingly the Chinese ideograph writing for "migration" is made of pictures for "great," "division," "west," and "walking." (9) The "great division" which sent them "walking from the west" was, of course, the chaos following the Tower of Babel.

In fact, the Chinese ideographs offer a number of clues to the Babylonian origin of the Chinese. The ideographic word for "ancestor" is made of pictures representing "god," "two persons," and "ground," a reference to the story of Adam and Eve. (10) The picture elements of the word "boat" are "vessel," "eight," and "mouth," apparently based on the eight occupants of Noah's Ark. (11) Similarly, the word "flood" is built from pictures of "eight," "united," "earth," and "water." (12) Even the word for "tower" is revealing, containing some elements meaning "mankind," "one," and "speech," pointing to a time when there was just one language. (13)

There may also have been a time when there was just one system of writing as well. (14) For the Chinese ideographs, Babylonian cuneiform, and Egyptian Hieroglyphics, which form the basis of all writing systems in the world today, (15) were all developed from picture graphic writing. The picture for the "sun," for example, is a circle in all three systems, (16) and in Egyptian and Chinese, the sun is also represented as an eye. (17) The "moon," in both Chinese and Egyptian, (18) is represented as the left eye. (19) The picture for "god" in Chinese is identical to the Egyptian and Babylonian "star," but in all three cultures "star" can mean "god" as well. (20) There are so many other examples of common picture graphs, such as "water," "hand," "fish," "home," "boundary," and "ear," that a common source is the only logical explanation. (21)

Chinese time measurements are also based on Babylonian concepts. A day is divided into twelve double hours, as in Babylonia. There is a seven-day period used in the lunar calendar, with each day represented by a celestial body beginning with the sun, corresponding exactly to the Babylonian (and Western) days of the week. Days are also organized into sixty-day cycles, using the Babylonian sixty-based system. (22) Similarly, long time measurements are based on Babylonian cycles of 12,60, and 3600-year periods. (23) Thus, the Chinese tradition of Middle Eastern origin can be verified through the software of their society, writing and mathematics.

As with Babylon and Egypt, (24) the Chinese maintained a “king list” which went backward from the first historical dynasty to the beginning of the human race. (25) The first emperor, the Chinese Adam, was Fu-Xi, (26) whose name means “Father of Sunlight” or “parental line,” (27) not unlike the Indo-European Dyaus-Pater (i.e. Jupiter), “Sky Father.” (28) Eve was Nu Wa who, like Babylonian Ninursag, was credited with forming the human race. (29) Nu Wa was also pictured as having a snake-body, in the same fashion as the Babylonian mother goddess Nintu. (30) Apparently the destructive role of the serpent was edited out of the Garden of Eden story, and the serpent was merged with Eve. The second emperor was Shen, who was miraculously conceived by a dragon, and was the first False “Seed of Woman” in Chinese mythology. (31) Like the Pharaoh of Egypt, Shen was equated with the Constellation Orion. (32)

The Chinese Noah was Emperor Yao, who dealt with the aftermath of the Flood. (33) According to legend Yao was born miraculously through the intervention of a dragon, another “False Seed of Woman.” (34) Yet another Emperor, Huang Ti, the “Yellow Emperor,” was born from the influences of the circumpolar stars of Ursa Major. (35) This last story, with its celestial connection, provides the clue necessary to understand the mystery of the dragon-fathered kings of China.

The great god of ancient China was Shang Ti, the “Emperor of Heaven.” (36) Shang Ti was the supreme creator god, and his name is linguistically equivalent to the Hebrew name for God Almighty, El Shaddai, (37) and the Egyptian “Incomprehensible God” Shetai. (38) Like the Babylonian Ea, the name may have been authentic, but the usage was Babylonian. For the Chinese Shang Ti lived in the Pole Star, (39) or in some stories, in circumpolar stars of Ursa Major. (40) At the time of ancient China’s formation, about 1700 B.C., the North Pole was nearest to Thuban, a star which was also targeted by the Great Pyramid. And Thuban is contained in Draco, the constellation of the dragon. (41) Thus, Shang Ti, as the dragon of Draco, was the father of the “False Seed of Woman,” the Emperor of China, and the dragon became the symbol for the Emperor. (42)

The Emperor of China, while he lived, was the “Son of Heaven,” (43) who performed the ritual tasks which were believed to be necessary to bring Heaven’s order to Earth. (44) When the emperor died, he ascended to Heaven and became Shang Ti, (45) much as the Egyptian Horus-King became Osiris at his death. The son of the emperor then became the “Son of Heaven” and worshipped his father as Shang Ti. Thus the “Son of Heaven,” conceived as the “False Seed of Woman” by the Dragon Star Thuban, returned to the Dragon Star at his death. And the Dragon, originally a picture of Satan, became the emblem of Shang Ti and China.

As both the god-king and god-priest on Earth, only the Emperor could worship his father Shang Ti. (46) This worship was accomplished by means of sacrifices at the equinoxes and solstices, along with a host of other rituals designed to appease the departed spirit of Shang Ti. (47) The common people were forbidden to worship the Emperor’s ancestor in Heaven, and were thus also discouraged from seeking the real God of Heaven by the god-king of China. They

became superstitious and, fearing evil if they did not appease the spirits of their ancestors as the Emperor did with his, (48) began the practice of ancestor worship. Thus was the state religion of China put in place, with the god-king Emperor alone worshipping his god-ancestor and the people worshipping their ancestors.

The failure of an Emperor to propitiate his ancestor Shang Ti was believed to cause disasters on Earth and could even lead to the overthrow of the Emperor's dynasty by loss of Heaven's approval. (49) Because of this, the Emperors employed astrologers to watch for signs in the heavens to warn them of impending disaster. (50) Of course, when a new dynasty did succeed in overthrowing an old one, the new Emperors were quick to obtain justification for their actions from their new court astrologers. (51) So important was astrological statecraft that the stars were re-mapped into a vast Imperial court in Heaven. A lunar zodiac, similar to the Babylonian and Indian versions, was used for imperial divination, but personal astrology was strictly forbidden. (52) The practice of personal astrology was finally brought into China by the Indian Buddhists along with the famous Chinese animal zodiac, which was imported from the Turkic peoples, in about the Tenth Century A.D. (53)

But the Buddhists were not the first to challenge the Chinese state religion. In the Sixth Century Before Christ, a man named Lao Tzu developed a philosophical system which became known as Taoism. As time passed, however, Taoism began to degenerate into spirit worship and superstition. (54) The great Chinese philosopher Confucius came to the support of the state religion, (55) and Taoists and Confucionists wrestled for supremacy.

Into the struggle between Taoism and Confucianism came Buddhism, which was itself deteriorating into a superstitious worship of Buddha by the time it reached China. (56) But the appeal of kindly Buddha was strong, and the Buddhists joined forces with the Taoists in supporting popular superstitions. (57) By the Fourth Century A.D. Buddhism was the dominant Chinese belief, although it was still outlawed from time to time. (58) Eventually, however, the ancient worship of the Son of Heaven was reconciled with Taoism and Buddhism, and all three religions became accepted and intermingled in Chinese belief systems. (59)

Of course, the Chinese Son of Heaven remained supreme as Babylon grew and flourished in China.

Then, in the year 5 B.C., a Chinese astrologer recorded a "guest star," or nova, as a portent from Heaven. (60) Another group of stargazers to the west also found the star to be a portent, and set out on a journey to worship the real Son of Heaven in Bethlehem.

But we are getting ahead of the story.

Chapter 10

The Foundations of Europe

The settlement of Europe began when Sargon, the Semitic king who defeated Nimrod, drove out the Japethite tribes north of Babylon. (1) The area Sargon targeted in the Zaragos Mountains contained the copper and tin resources needed to maintain the bronze-based economy of Babylon. (2) As a result, the retreating tribes of Ham and Japeth were cut off from their source of bronze in a world where the strength of bronze was essential for farming and weaponry. Finding other sources of copper and tin became their top priority, and the promise of power and wealth drew many to find and develop the mineral resources needed.

As the tribes of Japeth retreated northward through Anatolia, they soon found themselves on the southern shore of the Black Sea. This proved to be more of an opportunity than an obstacle, however, because travel and trade were much easier by water than by land. (3) The waterways quickly became the highways of the ancient world, and the Anatolian Japethites were among the first to take advantage of their new mobility.

The Black Sea proved unsuitable as a home base for maritime trade because its only access to the ocean is through the narrow Strait of Dardanelle. (4) This limited access is made more difficult because a powerful current flows out of the Black Sea into the Mediterranean, slowing down ships entering the Black Sea and making them very vulnerable to attack. To control this vital waterway, the Japethites moved west, establishing themselves at the City of Troy, just outside the Dardanelles on the Aegean coast of Anatolia. (5) We also know that they carried the Babylonian deities, including Ishtar, the Semitic Inana, to Troy with them. (6) Babylon was marching west.

The first European discoveries of copper and gold were made in the Balkans near the Black Sea coast at Karanovo. (7) Tin was found in Macedonia, (8) making the area into a Bronze Age industrial complex. To support the metals industry, farmers also migrated to the area and established an agricultural beachhead in Europe. The farmers and miners moved up the Danube River, finding minerals in the Carpathian Mountains and at Vacedol on the upper Danube. (9) From there, agriculture spread throughout Europe. (10)

Meanwhile, far to the south, the Hamitic peoples were scrambling to replace their metal supplies. The Egyptians had also discovered the value of oceangoing trade, having established trading routes up the Syrian coast almost to Anatolia, obtaining political control of the coastal areas. (11) Their next move was to the Island of Crete, which was settled by two tribes from Mizram (Egypt), the Caphtorim and the Casluhim whose descendants became the Philistines. (12) These seafaring Egyptians also became known later in history as the Phoenicians, (13) and Crete became the first great Mediterranean trading state. (14)

The ancient civilization of Crete is named "Minoan" after the legendary founder King Minos. The name is very similar to the Horus name of "Menes," the pharaoh who unified Upper and Lower Egypt. The Egyptian creator god Ptah was honored at Crete, and many Egyptian artifacts have been unearthed there. The earliest writing discovered on Crete, known as "Linear A," has been found to have many Phoenician elements, although it is not yet fully deciphered. (15) Since our alphabets are descended from the Phoenician's twenty-two letter phonetic rendition of Egyptian hieroglyphics, (16) "Linear A" may be the first true alphabet in the world.

The Egyptian concept of the sun as the "Eye" of Ra, which in itself was an echo of a Babylonian concept, (17) was adopted by the Minoans (18) and Japethite tribes in the Aegean and the Balkans. (19) Worship of the sun also was associated with the famous Minoan and Egyptian labyrinths, (20) which were essentially two-dimensional ziggurats with the "heavenly" meeting place at the center. For at the center of the labyrinth, like the top of the ziggurat or the King's Chamber of the Great Pyramid, the king would be reborn (21) as the False "Seed of Woman." In this way, through the labyrinth, the rule of the god-king was established in Crete.

From Crete, the Egyptians moved into Greece with their trade and colonies. (22) The "Minyans," a name similar to "Minoans," settled in the Greek region of Thessaly and instituted a vast irrigation project, damming Lake Kopras. (23) Archaeologists have also discovered a one-hundred-foot pyramid near Thebes made of a "natural cement" (24) like the Great Pyramid appears to be. Even the famous Greek city of Athens may have Egyptian roots, because its

namesake Goddess Athena is linguistically related to the Egyptian goddess “Neith.” Later in history, Egypt was a major trading partner for Athenian silver. (25)

As the Egyptians were moving into the Aegean, some of the tribes of Japeth were moving out to look for new sources of metal. The Tursha tribe from the northern Aegean moved to the northwestern Italian peninsula, becoming the ancestors of the Etruscans, (26) and bringing the “Eye” worship culture to Italy. (27) Northern Italy was apparently selected for settlement because it possessed small but important copper and tin resources. (28)

The next area settled by the Japethite Tribes was the Iberian Peninsula, where abundant resources of copper, tin, (29) and silver were to be found. (30) The area they settled became known as Tarshish, a name which belonged to the clan of Javan, a grandson of Japeth, whose clan became known as the maritime peoples (Ge. 10:4). Interestingly, the name “Tarshish” is also linguistically related to the Sumerian “Rashashu,” meaning “to melt.” (31) Thus, Tarshish means both Iberia and smelting, as the area became synonymous with its major business.

The Tarshish settlers, known as Celt-Iberians, brought a culture to Iberia which was very similar to that of Crete and the Aegean area. (32) They also made contact with the hunter-gatherers of Iberia, the Basque people, whose language is the oldest in Europe. (33) While the Basques did not give up their language or hunter-gatherer ways, they may have accepted the sun worship practices of the Celt-Iberians. For the Basques called the sun the “Eye of God,” as the Celt-Iberians did, (34) and the “Basque Cross,” like the “Celtic Cross,” was a sun worship icon which first appeared in the Balkan mining areas. (35)

Continuing their search for minerals, the Celt-Iberians established a colony in Brittany to exploit a small tin deposit there. (36) But they hit the jackpot when they found one of the world’s major tin deposits at Cornwall in southern England. (37) This discovery, along with the discovery of gold in Eastern Ireland and copper in Scotland (38) brought a population explosion to the British Isles. Thus, Britain, on the far side of Europe from Babylon, became a center of Babylonian civilization, while most of Europe was still unsettled.

Worship of the sun, the “Eye,” became the focus of an intense period of construction, not just in Britain, but all along the Atlantic coastal areas occupied by the Celt-Iberians. The most famous of these “megalithic” monuments is Stonehenge in England, a sun temple which was oriented toward sunrise on the summer solstice. (39) Almost as famous is the New Grange monument in Ireland, which is designed to permit the sun’s rays to reach its inner chamber only on the winter solstice. (40) The solar aspect of New Grange is further attested by the “Eye” carvings which adorn the monument. (41) Thus, the Celt-Iberians were enthusiastic practitioners of the Babylonian practice of bringing Heaven to Earth in their sun temples.

As with the god-kings of Babylon, the tribal kings of the Celt-Iberians and the Celts who followed them were considered to be direct descendants of the tribal founding god. (42) In addition, also emulating Nimrod, the tribal king practiced ritual marriage with the Mother Goddess of the tribe. As in Egypt and China, kings were held responsible for maintaining Heaven’s order on Earth through ritual practices. An aged or injured king was not permitted to remain in office and could even be ritually sacrificed. (43)

As was the case with the Aryans in India, the scattered power of tribal kingship allowed the priestly class, known as Druids, to gain power over the kings. (44) The Druids were considered fathers of their people, and were placed in charge not only of religious ceremony, but law, medicine, and learning as well. (45) They actually spoke before the king on matters brought before him, and remained independent of the king. (46) Like the Aryan Brahmins, they believed in the transmigration of souls, (47) but they did not establish a Caste System and their members

were drawn from the warrior class. They also adopted and carried out the practice of human sacrifice. (48)

The high Druid festival, and the time when human sacrifices were made, (49) was known as Samhain. Named after the Babylonian sun god Samas (or “Shamash,” (50) the festival celebrated the ritual mating of the father god, represented by the king, with the Mother Goddess, giving the god-king the right to rule for another year. At that time the dead were also recognized, a ritual perhaps deriving from the Egyptian Osiris-Isis-Horus cycle. The holiday was set on November 1, and survives to this day as Halloween. (51)

Six months later, on May 1, the Druids celebrated Beltane, a festival named for the Babylonian False “Seed of Woman”, “Bel,” and the word for “fire,” “Tane.” (52) The name “Bel” derives from the name of god “El,” the “strong one,” (53) and it is often found as “Baal.” (54) On Beltane, all fires were extinguished and re-started from a new Druid fire (55) in a ceremony similar to the Babylonian fire cleansing ceremony. (56) The festival was also celebrated by gathering around a pole which served both as a representative of the cosmic axis (i.e., North Pole) and, as with the Egyptian obelisk, a phallic symbol. This festival also survives as May Day. (57)

Another Druid festival, Lughnasa, held in mid-August, was named for “Lug,” the Sumerian word for “son,” and “Nash” for “mourning.” (58) This morning ceremony was like the “mourning” for Tammuz in Babylon or Osiris in Egypt. (59) A festival in early February was held in honor of the goddess Brigit, the “bright one,” (60) whose name is reminiscent of Babylonian Inana’s star symbol and identification with the brightest planet Venus. (61) The conception and birth of the god-king was celebrated at the winter solstice, perhaps explaining the womb-like structure of New Grange, when sunlight only penetrated to the interior chamber on the winter solstice. (62) The summer solstice, of course, is associated with the rule of the god-king, (63) and was perhaps more fittingly celebrated in a large open-air temple like Stonehenge, which received the sun at its central holy point on the summer solstice.

Interestingly, the major feasts of Samhain and Beltane are about fifty-two days, or one seventh of a year, away from the solstices. This seventh-year period may be a numerological symbol of the seven days and seven planets, and could be related to the seventh-year periods when sunlight enters the chambers of the Great Pyramid.

It may have been the Celt-Iberians who brought the seventh-year calendar to the occupants of Central America.

Because the search for mineral wealth did not stop at the borders of Europe.

Chapter 11

East Meets West: The Americas

As in most other areas of the world, it was the hunter-gatherers who first arrived in the Americas. They came from Siberia, following big game across the frozen-over (or dried up) Bering Strait into Alaska. From there they moved south and east, reaching the southern tip of South America in a few hundred years. (1)

The rapid scattering of the hunters across the Americas was made possible by their nomadic lifestyle and the small groups in which they operated. Always on the move, they covered ground rapidly in search of game, breaking into small groups because it took large blocks of land to

sustain a hunting population. (2) With no material possessions except for those which could be carried from place to place, they left behind most of the material civilization they inherited from Babylon.

However, they did not leave behind the Babylonian religion. Certainly there was no room for a divine king in a hunting group with only a few dozen people. (3) But the Babylonian institution of priesthood, moving into the power vacuum left by weak diffuse leadership, came to dominate the life of the people. The religious system which developed among the hunter-gatherers of Siberia and the Americas, almost identical to that of other hunter-gatherers in Africa, Oceania, and Southeast Asia, became known as Shamanism, after the priests who were called Shamans. (4)

Like the Babylonian priesthood, the Shamans inserted themselves between God and man, so that only the Shamans were permitted to have contact with the supernatural world. (5) Thus, people were controlled by the Shamans because they believed that the Shamans controlled the dispensing of supernatural blessings. Often the Shamanic family was “chosen” by a divine being to hold their position, and the deceased ancestors of individual Shamans were often thought to have selected them from eligible family members. (6)

The Shaman was thought to move between Heaven, Earth, and the underworld along the “Axis” of the world, (7) a concept which resonates as the World Tree or Ziggurat of Babylon. At the top of Heaven, the axis rotates around the polar stars, and power resides there as it did with the Siberians’ cousins, the Chinese. This belief could be seen in recent times among Native Americans like the Omaha Indians, who set up a sacred pole aimed at the North Pole Star as part of their tribal rituals. Not surprisingly, the clan which kept the Omaha sacred pole ruled the tribe, as the Shamans ruled over their clans and tribes. (8)

But it was not long before the first Europeans reached North America. We are not talking about Christopher Columbus or Leif Erickson. Rather, we are speaking of the Celt-Iberians, (9) whose ambitious metal prospecting brought settlement to Western Iberia, Brittany, England, and Ireland. The area they settled was in North America, covering about the same area as the “red paint” sites in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Northeastern New England, which traditional archaeologists have named because of the red ochre used to paint the dead. (10) Red Ochre, of course, is also prominent in burials in Celt-Iberian Western Europe. (11) From New England, they spread inland, apparently working the great ancient copper mines on Lake Superior which formed the core area of the “old copper culture” identified by archaeologists. (12)

Like the European Celt-Iberians, the New England settlers built megalithic stone structures for religious purposes, adopting a style almost identical to some found in Western Iberia. (13) Many were oriented toward the winter solstice like New Grange in Ireland, or the summer solstice like Stonehenge in England. (14) The largest structure, at Mystery Hill in New Hampshire, was built about the same time as Stonehenge, and is oriented toward the North Pole as well as toward the Summer Solstice Point. There is also evidence that human sacrifices were made there, just as the Druids made human sacrifices in Western Europe. (15)

The European Celt-Iberians developed an alphabet, based on the Phoenician alphabet sounds, which consisted of straight marks designed to represent hand sign language. (16) This alphabet, known as “Ogham,” has been discovered at several North American sites. The name “Bel” or “Baal,” the Druid and Babylonian god, has been found on a rock on Mystery Hill in New Hampshire. (17) The name “Ra” the sun god, has been found in Vermont, (18) and the ubiquitous “Eye,” representing the sun, has been found in New England as well. (19) The

Ogham alphabet itself may have survived in North America in the form of the famous Indian sign language.

Another interesting survival of the ancient Celt-Iberian presence is the strange hieroglyphic writing of the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia. (20) These hieroglyphics were found to be very similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics, and could be a survival of an intermediate form of writing between Egyptian hieroglyphics and the later Phoenician alphabet. It could also be related to the Cretan "Linear A" writing of the Minoan kingdom.

The Cretans, who were trading partners with the Celt-Iberians in Europe, probably learned of the Americas from the Celt-Iberians. No doubt, the Celt-Iberians had followed the same route later taken by the Vikings to North America, following the islands from Scotland to Iceland to Greenland and then to Newfoundland. (21) The Cretans, however, realized that there was a much quicker route, and launched out into the North Atlantic currents. It turns out that, once in the westward flowing current off North Africa, it is almost impossible not to reach the Americas. (22) The currents flow into the same area discovered by Christopher Columbus three thousand years later—the Caribbean Sea. (23) And, like the Spanish after them, the Cretans soon found their way to the mineral riches of Mexico.

At La Venta, near Vera Cruz on the Mexican Gulf Coast, archaeologists have discovered giant Negroid heads, (24) apparently representing the god-kings of the city. (25) They wore Cretan helmets, (26) which were not out of place on the Negroid heads because the original Cretans were Hamitic Egyptians, members of the black race. At the same site are pictured bearded Eastern Mediterranean men, (27) the ancestors of the Phoenicians, who also lived and traded in the Cretan melting pot. The Cretan civilization created at La Venta, known as "Olmec" was the basis of all later Meso-American civilizations. (28)

From La Venta, the Cretans mounted a massive campaign of exploration for mineral wealth in the U.S. Mississippi River drainage basin. (29) The explorers left many Cretan/Phoenician carvings and inscriptions, and the ancient settlement at Poverty Point, Louisiana, apparently was an Olmec colony. Copper was found in the desert southwest of the U.S., and as a result, the U.S. southwestern cultures were greatly influenced by the Olmecs. (30) Two southwestern tribes, the Pima and the Zuni, still have many linguistic elements in common with the Afro-Asian languages of the Egyptians and Cretans. (31) Back in Mexico, explorers found vast riches of copper, silver, and gold. (32) Another interesting find was the Cretans' discovery of Mexican shellfish which would produce the same expensive purple dye as was made using the complex process invented by the Cretans, and later taught to the Phoenicians. (33)

However, none of the North American expeditions turned up the one critical Bronze Age metal, tin. So they began to explore South America, establishing a base on the arid Pacific coast of Peru that became known to us as the Chavin culture. (34) Finally, in the high Andes of modern Bolivia, they found the mother lode of tin. There, on the shores of Lake Titicaca, they built the great ancient city of Tiahuanaco, an ancient marvel of Cretan architecture. The city became the center for bronze work, with many surviving pieces having the distinctive Cretan spiral mark on them. (35) Soon the bronze business brought the South American Chavin culture from the status of a colony to an equal trading partner with the Olmec civilization. (36)

So it was that the trading empire of the Cretans was centered in Peru and Mexico, with trading posts in the southwestern U.S., the Mississippi River Valley, and several settlements scattered about in the outlying areas. But even in the center of the empire, La Venta, it is unlikely that the Cretans even constituted a majority of the population. (37) In fact, analysis of burial remains at La Venta show a Negroid presence of only 13.5% in the oldest layers. (38)

This is in keeping with the later colonial practices of the Phoenician descendants of the Cretans, who even in their capital city of Carthage were a minority. (39) The other inhabitants of the North American Cretan colonies were slaves or hunter-gatherers who were historically drawn to the wealth and agricultural surplus of trading centers. (40)

To be sure, leadership remained in the hands of the Cretan elite. In both South (41) and North America, the king was regarded as the son of the sun, (42) like the Egyptian Pharaoh. The king was also the chief priest (43) and could be resurrected as the maize god, (44) a form of the False Seed of Woman. The kings were mummified in both North and South America, as in Egypt. (45)

In La Venta the Olmecs created the first “sacred landscape” of Mexico, a reflection of the Babylonian “House of Heaven.” (46) Like the Babylonians, the Olmecs crowned their work with a Ziggurat, the first step pyramid of Mexico. The pyramid was aligned to the North Pole Star, (47) like the Great Pyramid of Egypt. But the polar alignment might also have represented a connection to the polar veneration of the Shamanistic subjects of the Olmec Cretans.

There was apparently some attempt for synthesis between the sun-worshipping Cretans and the North Pole-worshipping Siberians. On the one hand, solar worship can be inferred from the alignment of all major Olmec cities along the summer or winter solstice lines. (48) In addition, the “pecked cross,” a sun sign consisting of a dotted circle with a dotted cross on the inside, is found throughout Central America (49) and the U.S. Desert Southwest (50) in a form which is identical to the pecked crosses of Europe. (51) On the other hand, long north running lines have been found in Peru, Central America, and the U.S. Desert Southwest, and such lines are associated with the Shamanistic return of the dead to the North Polar regions. (52) The most famous example of these lines, the Nazca Lines of Peru, are also incorporated into a “sacred landscape” featuring huge animal pictures which were believed to be used for Shamanistic purposes. (53)

Another attempt at mingling the symbols of solar and polar religions can be found in the adoption of the Dragon, (54) the ancient polar constellation and sign of the Chinese “Son of Heaven,” as a major religious element. The Maya Kukulcan, Inca Viracocha, (55) and later Aztec Quetzalcoatl (56) were all referred to as the “Feathered Serpent.” The Chinese ideogram for dragon is a serpent with wings, (57) indicating the Asiatic source of the “Feathered Serpent” concept. In addition, the mother goddess of Central America is often pictured as a snake, (58) reminiscent of the Chinese snake mother Nu Wa and the Babylonian original Nintu.

But the solar belief system had a great advantage over the polar religion in tropical Mexico, because as people moved further south, the stars of the North Polar Region sank lower toward the horizon and became less commanding in the sky. The sun, on the other hand, moved to the top of the sky, even occupying the dominant zenith position, directly overhead, for two days each year in the tropical regions. There was even a legend about how the twin sons of the sun (i.e. the two zenith days) shot “7 Macau” (i.e. the 7 polar “Big Dipper” stars) out of the top of the World Tree. (59) Final victory for the solar forces was assured when the two zenith days were moved into the seventh-year sacred calendar of the Europeans.

This merger of zenith days with the Druid calendar occurred when a solar observer noted that the sun was at zenith on May 1 and August 13 in the Olmec city of Izapa. Those two days are each fifty-two days, one seventh of the year, from the Summer Solstice and correspond to the Druid holidays of Beltane and Lughnasa. August 13 also represented the first day of the current world age to the Olmecs. (62) Since there would be 260 days from the first date, August 13, and its zenith point until the next zenith date as May 1, the Olmecs established a calendar cycle of

260 days to insure that the next Beltane holiday would be celebrated properly. Thus, the famous 260-day ceremonial calendar of the Olmecs was born out of the triumph of the solar religion and became a part of their legacy to the Mayan, Toltec, and Aztec people who followed them.

But there was a much darker Olmec legacy, a legacy of suffering and pain, which came from their adoption of the Cretan practice of human sacrifice. (61) Like the Phoenicians who followed the Cretans, the Olmecs sacrificed children to the Phoenician gods, Baal and Tanit. (62) They also waged warfare against their neighbors, and eventually among themselves, to obtain captives to sacrifice. Ultimately the Maya civilization, which followed the Olmecs, was destroyed by sacrificial warfare. (63)

The Babylonian System had finally reached its fullest extent and fullest evil. The system, which began by cutting men off from the knowledge of God, and then made them slaves to their god-kings, had grown to where it now took their very lives as tribute. The whole world was in slavery to the Babylonian System.

But God had seen the slavery of His people.

The time for their deliverance had begun.

Chapter 12

Deliverance out of Babylon

God has always had His people.

The Bible story focuses on the family of Abraham after the nations were scattered from Babylon. But we are given tantalizing hints of people and even whole clans or tribes who remained loyal to God in the face of the Babylonian apostasy.

There was, for example, a man whose story is contained in the Bible book of Job, which is believed by many to be the oldest book in the Bible. He was from Uz, a land just east of Syria and Canaan, and an ancient text from the Nineteenth Century B.C. mentions a prince named Job from that area. Job was clearly a worshipper of God, and we can gather from the story that his friends were also. (1) Another righteous man mentioned in the ancient times was Melchizedek, the King of Jerusalem, who blessed Abraham and who was recognized as a priest of God by Abraham. (2) The father-in-law of Moses, Jethro, was also a prince and priest of God in Midian. (3) These men are shining examples of faith in a world which had rebelled against God.

But even though the world had fallen under the power of the Babylonian System, with false messiahs enthroned around the world, God still planned to send the real Messiah, the true Seed of Woman, to fulfill His plan to save mankind. So God called Abraham to move from his home in Ur in Babylonia to the land of Canaan, where God promised to make his descendants into a great nation (Ge. 12:1,2). And from that great nation would come the Seed, Jesus Christ, through whom redemption would come (Gal. 3:13, 16). Yet God told Abraham that the great nation He would create was to begin, not as kings or princes, but as slaves (Ge. 15:13,14).

The great-grandchildren of Abraham entered the land of Egypt, the most powerful Babylonian kingdom on Earth, and, just as God had foretold, their descendants became slaves there. They lived in the easternmost portion of the Nile Delta, known as Goshen. The city where they settled was called Avaris, and archaeological remains of Semitic herdsmen have been found there. (4) Much later the city became called Pi Ramesse, which led to the erroneous association of Pharaoh Rameses II with the slavery of Israel. (5) But even in slavery, God's

people prospered, and the Pharaohs became more and more afraid of them (Ex. 1:9-12). And well they should have been.

God had made up His mind; it seems, to make an example out of the Pharaoh of Egypt (Ex. 7:3-5). The Pharaoh was revered by his people as the god-king, and like the other Babylonian god-kings, he had put his people in bondage. God intended to show the whole world that the god-king of the most powerful nation on Earth was no match for Him. Nothing could stop Him from setting His people free.

God chose His spokesman with great care. He was an Israelite, saved from the Pharaoh's death sentence as a baby and raised in the Pharaoh's own house (Ex. 2:5,6). However, he killed an Egyptian slave master and was forced to flee from Egypt to save his life. He was taught humility by spending the next forty years as a shepherd in the desert land of Midian (Ac. 7:29,30). Moses was eighty years old (Ex. 7:7) and had difficulty speaking (Ex. 6:30) by the time God called him to deliver his people. So God sent a stuttering old man with a following of frightened slaves to face the most powerful man on Earth.

The contest began badly for Moses, with the Pharaoh mocking his request to let his people worship God (Ex. 5:4). Then the Pharaoh increased the labor required of the Israelites, causing dissension in the ranks (Ex. 5:21). His magicians were even able to mimic the sign God gave to Moses of changing his staff into a serpent (Ex. 7:11,12). Yet, even when the snakes of the magicians were destroyed before his eyes, the Pharaoh would not listen (Ex. 7:13). But God had set Pharaoh up for the real power encounter, a collision with the power of God Himself, which we call the ten plagues of Egypt.

The Lord's first point of attack was upon the Nile River, the basis of Egypt's agriculture, which was itself worshipped as the god Hapi. (6) Moses turned the water into "dam," a Hebrew word used for blood which comes from a root meaning "silence" or "death." (7) The waters became "silent" with death, as all the fish died (Ex. 7:19-21). However, the use of the word for blood implies reddish color of the river and modern scholars have thought that the red color may have been caused by a red algae, somewhat like the "Red Tides" which periodically kill fish today. (8) The Pharaoh's magicians could duplicate the reddening of the water (Ex. 7:22), but they could not bring their god Hapi back to life.

Seven days later a massive crop of frogs was born out of the dead Nile River (Ex. 8:12), perhaps aided by the death of river predators. This plague also involved one of the gods of Egypt, Herket, pictured as the frog-headed wife of the creator god of Egypt. (9) Here again the magicians could also make frogs seem to appear (Ex. 8:7), but they could not remove them. The Pharaoh finally asked for Moses' help, seeming to submit to the hand of God (Ex. 8:8-14).

But the Pharaoh fell into a pattern of reversing his submission to God once the plague had been removed (Ex. 8:15). So God sent a plague of gnats and then a plague of flies, both perhaps originating with the dead Nile and the dead frogs. Then came a plague on livestock, perhaps spread by the gnats and flies, followed by a plague of boils on people which could have come from the infested livestock. (10) However, except for the gnats, God spared the Israelite Land of Goshen, further showing His power over Pharaoh (Ex. 8:22-24). These plagues on the river and land also showed the Egyptian people the true impotence of their god-king, who was responsible for the well being of both. (11)

When the Pharaoh still refused to yield, the Lord proved that He was the God of the sky as well as the land and water. First came a huge hailstorm, the worst ever in Egypt, which killed the livestock and servants who did not heed God's warning to seek shelter (Ex. 9:18-21). Then the Lord used the winds to gather a huge swarm of locusts which ate everything not destroyed by

the hail (Ex.10:13-15). Finally, the Lord humbled the Egyptian god Ra, the sun, by sending three days of total darkness on the land, (12) perhaps caused by a volcanic eruption of the Mediterranean Island of Thera. (13) Still the Pharaoh refused to let God's people go.

The Lord had humbled the Pharaoh on the earth and in the heavens, but it was now God's time to deal with the god-king himself. The Lord let Pharaoh live, striking instead at the Horus King in waiting—the first-born son of Pharaoh. There would be no child Horus King to succeed the Pharaoh when he died, because God decreed that the firstborn of the Pharaoh, and all of Egypt's firstborn with him, would die in one night.(Ex. 12:29,30) Only the Israelites escaped by putting the blood of a lamb on their doorposts (Ex. 12:7,13), a picture of the sacrifice of God's firstborn Son and salvation available through Him. (14)

The grieving Pharaoh set the Israelites free that same night, and the frightened people of Egypt gave them gold, silver, and clothing to send them as quickly as possible on their way (Ex. 12:31-36). The Israelites' city of Avaris in Goshen was abandoned, with no further occupation by Israelites appearing in the archaeological record. (15) But the Pharaoh changed his mind again, this time summoning his army to bring the fleeing slaves back to Egypt (Ex. 14:5-7). They caught the Israelites beside the "Yam Suph," or "Sea of Reeds," which is erroneously called the "Red Sea" in most Bible translations. (16)

The Sea of Reeds is thought to be a large lagoon on the Mediterranean Sea, known as Lake Menzaleh, which borders on the Land of Goshen. (17) The Israelites were trapped against the sea until God sent a strong east wind which pushed the shallow water back, allowing the Israelites to cross the sea (Ex. 14:21,22). But when the Egyptian army tried to follow, the sea rushed back in, not unlike the effects seen with a tidal wave roaring in after the sea first recedes from the shoreline. Some even think that the tidal wave effect was caused by the Thera volcanic eruption which may have darkened the skies earlier. (18) Whatever the cause, the Pharaoh's army was destroyed by God, and the Israelites finally were free (Ex. 14:28-30).

Bereft of his army, stripped of his claim to be god, without even an heir, the Pharaoh was not able to keep his kingdom either. Foreign invaders, meeting no military opposition, poured into Egypt and became known as the "Hyksos," or "shepherd kings". (19) The defeated Pharaoh left no monuments, and even his name is not known with certainty. However, modern research has indicated that the last Pharaoh of the Thirteenth Dynasty, Dudimose, is the most likely candidate. His reign is described very simply by the Egyptian historian Mantheo: "A Blast of God Smote Us." (20)

As for the Israelites, they had a long and difficult journey ahead of them as they marched to reclaim their inheritance. For God had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants, but they could not take possession until the Canaanites' sins had reached their "full measure" (Ge. 15:16). Archeologists have found that the Canaanites acknowledged El, the supreme God, but actually worshipped the False "Seed of Woman," "Baal." A female mother/wife/sister goddess, "Anath," entered into "sacred marriage" with the kings, as in Babylon. (21) Like their Baal worshipping cousins, the Phoenicians, they also practiced child sacrifice (22) and this practice was no doubt the "full measure" of sin God was waiting for.

Even so, the Lord knew that the Israelites were not ready to take hold of their inheritance (Ex. 13:17). They moved into the Sinai Peninsula, where satellite imagery had found traces of their migration. (23) They spent forty years in the desert, raising up a new generation of warriors fully trained in the ways of the Lord (Deut. 2:14;3:5). For God did not want the Israelites to fall back into the sins of Babylon (Deut. 4:15-19).

Since the people at Babylon were first led astray through being separated from contact with God by their priests, God required that the community members were to remain involved in His worship. Once a week the family gathered to celebrate the Lord's Sabbath, and to cease work (Deut. 5:12-15). The greatest Israelite feast, the Passover, was celebrated by the families in the households by eating the Passover meal (Ex. 12:6-8). The people were encouraged to learn God's laws, discuss them with each other, and teach them to their children (Deut. 6:7). They were also to slaughter their own sacrificial animals, although the priests were to attend to the ceremonial matters (Lev. 1:5). Thus, the people were to be regularly kept in contact with the Lord.

The cultic practices of Babylonian religion were strictly prohibited. The sympathetic magic practice of idol worship was forbidden (Deut. 4:15-17), and the Israelites were to destroy the worship sites of the mother of the False "Seed of Woman," also known as Asherah, (Deut. 7:5). The altars and other places where the Babylonians practiced "bringing Heaven to Earth" were also to be destroyed (Deut. 7:6). Babylonian worship of heavenly bodies was forbidden (Deut. 4:19), along with the associated practice of divination (Lev. 19:26). And any Israelite practicing child sacrifice was to be put to death (Lev. 20:2).

As for the Babylonian institute of kingship, the Lord's plan was to avoid it altogether. God Himself was to choose the leader of His people (Deut. 31:23), to be confirmed by the previous leader (Deut. 34:9). When leadership had failed, God would raise up a judge to deliver the people from their enemies (Jud. 2:16). Yet the people finally demanded that Samuel, the last judge, appoint a king. The Lord allowed the people their wish, but told Samuel that the people had rejected Him as King and (I Sa. 8:7), and that slavery would follow. (I Sa. 8:17) And for most, it did.

But even with the failures of the Israelites, God had set up a beacon of light and freedom from Babylonian slavery in Israel.

And once Israel was in place, the Lord offered the world one more chance to throw off the Babylonian yoke.

The age of iron was dawning.

PART FOUR: THE AGE OF IRON

"Daniel said: 'In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of Heaven churning up the great sea. Four great Beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.'"

Daniel 7:2,3

Chapter 13

The Collapse of the Bronze Age

The ancient world had always known of iron, but because of its high melting temperature the only pure iron came from meteorites. It was forty times as valuable as silver in the Nineteenth Century before Christ. (1) Even though iron was a thousand times more plentiful

than copper, 5.8% of the Earth's crust, it could not be used. (2) Thus the world had to depend on scarce copper and tin resources to make the strongest metal of its age, bronze.

But about the time of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, the secret of smelting iron was discovered in Anatolia. (3) By the Twelfth Century B.C. ironsmiths had learned to make carbon steel, which was three times stronger than iron. (4) Within a few hundred years the cost of iron had fallen to one two thousandth of the price of silver, a reduction of 80,000 times. More importantly, the cost of iron was less than half a percent of the cost of tin, and a small fraction of the cost of bronze. (5)

Not only was iron cheaper, it was better. Iron revolutionized crafts like stone cutting and carpentry. It opened up vast areas of agricultural land by providing stronger axes for cutting forests and stronger plows for rockier soil. (7) Of course, iron weapons were markedly superior to bronze ones, and at a fraction of the cost. (8) Within a few generations most weapons were being made of iron. (9) Unable to compete on price or quality, the bronze business was doomed.

The demise of bronze brought about profound reversal of fortunes for the god-kings and warrior elites who had profited from the bronze trade. For in fact the high cost of bronze had insured that the kings and their warriors monopolized the expensive bronze weapons, allowing them to dominate and enslave their subjects. (10) Iron armed the common people, (11) giving them the opportunity to escape from their Babylonian slavery. The iron technology revolution launched a vast economic and political revolution, with worldwide consequences.

The trade in scarce tin for bronze making had built a global trading network which encompassed the Babylonian kingdoms of Babylon, Egypt, India, China, Europe, and the Americas. Egyptian traders had even established trading colonies in Malaysia and the South Pacific, and the ubiquitous "Eye of Ra" is found throughout the Pacific even as far as the coast of British Columbia. (13) But with the substitution of iron for bronze, there was no reason to trade in tin and little reason to hazard long sea voyages to trade in other materials which were available much closer to home. Eventually, ocean-going trade died up. (14)

For the far flung colonies of Babylon, the decline in trade led to increasing isolation, until the ships came no more and they were left on their own. The Negroid peoples of Austronesia, apparently abandoned by the Egyptians, (15) were lost to the world for almost three thousand years. Eventually the Indian Aryans moved to establish their influence in Southeast Asia and Indonesia, (16) taking over what local trade remained.

In the Americas, isolation proved disastrous for the Babylonian colonies. In New England, the Celt-Iberian colony apparently was overthrown and assimilated into the hunter-gatherer population, leaving some genetic and linguistic traces among the Eastern Algonquin Indians. (17) As far as the Minoan colonists in Mexico, the Olmecs, are concerned, we know that their trading network collapsed and that their main center of San Lorenzo was destroyed. (18) At another Olmec site, a bas-relief shows the overthrow of the Minoan-Egyptian Negroid kings. (19) Here again, the survivors were assimilated into the population, as shown by the archeologists' discovery that the proportion of Negro skeletons decreased over time. A similar fate overtook the South American Minoan colony as well. (21)

The overthrow of the god-kings in the Americas offered the American peoples the opportunity to throw off the yoke of the Babylonian System. But they did not take advantage of it, and simply recreated the Babylonian System under new god-kings. The Maya, who followed the Olmecs, (22) treated their rulers as sons of the Sun God, (23) as did the Incas of South America. (24) The Mayans, in fact, outdid the Olmecs, building vast complexes of pyramids in

their homeland and spreading their pyramid cities and concept of the king as a child of the sun deep into North America. (25)

Sadly, the Mayans also followed the Olmecs in the practice of human sacrifice. As time passed, the demand for more and more sacrificial victims caused the Mayan city-states to exist in a perpetual state of warfare. Ultimately, the whole Mayan civilization was destroyed, (26) but even then, the practice of human sacrifice was never abandoned. By the time the Spaniards arrived in Mexico, the Aztec successors to the Maya were sacrificing an estimated 50,000 human beings each year. (27)

The isolation of the Americas, which led to the replacement of foreign Babylonian kingdoms with native Babylonian kingdoms, had two profound long-term effects on American civilization. First, isolation caused a loss of technology, as the new iron technology never reached the Americas, and the art of making bronze was only retained in South America. (28) As a result, most Native American societies retreated to “Stone Age” technology. Secondly, lack of contact meant that the Americans never developed resistance to the diseases which developed and spread through the commercial channels of Europe, Asia, and Africa. (29) When contact was resumed after the Spanish discovered the Americas, the American civilizations were destroyed by the epidemic diseases and superior technology of the Europeans. (30) One can only wonder what would have happened if the Native Americans had returned to God instead of returning to Babylon.

In Europe, the collapse of the bronze economy fell most heavily on the workers, at first. Miners and craftsmen suddenly found themselves out of work, unable to trade their goods or services for the grain needed to feed their families. Since many mining communities were in the unfertile mountains, the only choices available to the Bronze Age workers were migration or starvation. In the heartland of the European industrial district, the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube River Valley, there is evidence of massive depopulation, with even good agricultural lands falling back to pastoral usage. (31)

The Bronze Age refugees were not, however, content just to passively depend on the mercy of their neighbors. These were skilled craftsmen who rapidly realized the military advantages of the new iron weaponry. In fact, the sword which became the standard weapon of the Iron Age originated in the Carpathian Mountains. (32) Thus, well armed and motivated by their desperate needs, they poured out of central Europe into the rich and settled areas of Bronze Age civilization. (33)

To the west, the continental Celtic peoples moved in on the Atlantic coastal civilization of the Celt-Iberians. The continental strongholds of the Celt-Iberians soon fell to the continental Celts, including, ultimately, the Celt-Iberian homeland in Iberia. (34) They then invaded Britain, driving the Celt-Iberians out of Britain and into Ireland. (35) Thus, the Celtic Britains would later claim no knowledge of the great Celt-Iberian stone monuments like Stonehenge. (36) And, indeed, there is no evidence that any megalithic monuments were erected in western Europe after the fall of the Celt-Iberians. (37)

Unfortunately, the Celts failed to take advantage of this opportunity to be free of the Babylonian System. They kept the institution of the god-king, continuing the Babylonian practice of ritual marriage of the king to the mother goddess of the tribe. (38) The Druids, the high priests, remained in place and continued to dominate the kings. (39) The Druids also continued to practice human sacrifice, retaining even this most gruesome of the Babylonian practices until the Romans destroyed them. (40)

The powerful Celtic thrust to the west contained only a fraction of the explosive exodus out of Central Europe. The majority of the migrants moved south and east, toward the Bronze Age kingdoms in Greece and Anatolia. (41) The first civilization affected was the Minoan colony in Greece, and the other cities which had grown up around it. The Grecian colonial city of Thebes was destroyed, along with the Bronze Age cities at Mycenae and numerous cities on the Aegean coastline. From the Greek coast, the invaders moved in on Crete, destroying the great capital city of Knossos and the Minoan civilization which had been planted by the Egyptians. (42) A Greek “Dark Age” began, and it was to be 400 years before the Greeks recovered the level of civilization destroyed at the end of the Bronze Age. (43)

In Anatolia, as in Greece, almost every major city or palace was destroyed by the invaders. The famous city of Troy was burned down, and the powerful Hittite Empire, which fostered the development of iron technology, disappeared. The invaders moved to Syria, burning the ancient trading center of Ugarit along with Kadesh, Aleppo, and the Euphrates River cities of Carchemish and Emar. (44) Further south, refugees from Crete established themselves on the southeastern Mediterranean coast, becoming known as the Philistine people who became such a threat to the Israelites. On the coast of Lebanon, the invaders intermarried with the local population and became the Phoenician nation. (45)

Eventually, the invaders reached the borders of Egypt, which had recovered much of its strength in the centuries following the Exodus. The Pharaoh Ramesses III (not the Ramesses erroneously tied to the Exodus) decisively defeated the invaders, known as “Sea Peoples,” driving them back to the Gaza Strip. (46) However, Egypt was never able to regain the dominant position it once held over the lands now occupied by the Syrians, Phoenicians, Philistines, and Israelites. (47)

The overthrow of the Babylonian god-kings in Greece, Anatolia, and the Levant led to the beginning of democratic ideas about political power, just as the technology of iron had democratized military power. A fully armed populace was well able to defeat the small and expensive elite armies of the Bronze Age. (48) In fact, it has been estimated that King David of Israel, with his citizen-soldier army, possessed the most powerful military force on earth during his reign. (49) Thus, the common man, who was the source of military power in the new Iron Age nations, was given a voice in their government. Our modern democratic institutions were born from these early Iron Age beginnings. (50)

As for the other trappings of the Babylonian System, the new nations experienced varying degrees of freedom. Israel was continually tempted to compromise with its pagan neighbors, and the Lord saved them from their enemies on many occasions after the people repented of their compromises (Neh. 9:26-28). The Greeks mingled their Indo-European religious beliefs with those of the Babylonian local populace, ultimately producing the well-known Greek pagan mythology, and thus adopting Babylonian religious beliefs while rejecting the Babylonian god-king. (51) The Phoenicians adopted the Canaanite gods, of which Baal was the chief, but also adopted the Canaanite practice of child sacrifice (52) which God detested. Thus, while the Babylonian institution of the god-king had been discarded in many places, the Babylonian System remained intact everywhere but in Israel, and even there it was a constant threat to God’s people.

The collapse of the Bronze Age had shaken Babylon to its core, but had not overthrown the system of Babylon. Indeed, of all the places shaken by the collapse, the least affected was Babylon itself. (53)

And Babylon was about to assume center stage in world history once again.

Chapter 14

Empire Returns to Babylon

For a millennium after the Semitic king Sargon had driven out the tribes of Ham and Japeth, Babylonia was recognized as the center of civilization, but was not able to regain dominance over its neighbors. Sargon's successors fought against never-ending rebellions as the unity of the Semitic tribes broke down after his great victory. (1) Eventually Sargon's dynasty was overthrown, and the seat of government was removed from Babylon to Ur, then to Isin, and lastly to Larsa. There was constant warfare between the city-states for about four hundred years. (2)

Finally, the western Semitic tribes, known as Amorites ("westerners") succeeded in recapturing the city of Babylon and re-establishing the kingship there. (3) Under the great King Hammurabi, the Amorites conquered all of Babylonia. Hammurabi made Babylon such a center of power and influence that the kingship remained there even when others overran Babylonia.

Hammurabi also instituted a significant change to the Babylonian religious system. Unlike his predecessors, he never allowed himself to be deified as the False Seed of Woman, and such was his influence that his successors in Babylon abdicated their claim to be god-kings. (5) Instead of a god-king, Hammurabi established himself as the earthly representative of the chief Babylonian god Marduk (or Merodach). (6) Thus, the kings of Babylon abandoned their claim to divinity but retained the power of divinity by becoming the chief priest and spokesman of the supreme god. (7) And so the worship of Bel Merodach, the son of Ea, the False Seed of Woman, became the state religion of Babylon.

The greatest ceremony of the state religion was the annual "Akitu" festival, which was celebrated at the Babylonian new year in the spring. The statue of Bel Merodach, or Marduk, was escorted into the city by the king, ceremonially recreating the first entry of the god into the city and showing the king's submission to Marduk. (8) This event was celebrated from before the time of Sargon, and it is interesting to note that the name "Marduk" is thought by some to derive from the name "Marad" which, with a linguistic prefix "Ni" produces "Ni-Marad," known to us as Nimrod, the first king of Babylon. (9) Such was the power of Babylonian religious ceremony that the ancient enemy of the Semitic Babylonians could live on as their chief god. And the Akitu Festival, also known as "taking the hands of Bel" became the most important emblem of the king's position as the representative of Marduk. (10)

One can imagine the difficulties that would be met by a king who was unable to "take the hands of Bel." And the long-lived dynasty of Hammurabi was in fact ended when a Hittite war party sacked Babylon and carried the statue of Marduk back to their country. (11) The next dynasty, the Kassites, managed to recover the statue, but were not able to regain the empire which had been held by Hammurabi's dynasty. (12) Military power had shifted to the northwest of Babylon, toward the land of the Indo-European speaking Hittites. The Semitic peoples of northwestern Mesopotamia, known as Assyrians, found it necessary to form a military state in order to survive. When the Bronze Age collapse destroyed the Hittite kingdom, Assyria became a barrier against the Iron Age marauders. (13) Hardened by battle, the Assyrians fielded the first true Iron Age army, and their military prowess made them the terror of their age. (14)

The homeland of the Assyrians was located along the upper reaches of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley (15) in the area of Nimrod's expansion of Babylon. The region took its name from the

city of Ashur, a name which represents a son of Noah's son Shem, who was apparently deified as the national god of the Assyrians. (16) The name Ashur is also equivalent to the Egyptian "As-Ar", or Osiris, and means the "dwelling place of the eye" (i.e. Sun). (17) It is also a cognate to the Sumerian "Anshar" which refers to the pole star. (18) Thus, Ashur combines both solar worship similar to the Egyptians and worship of the Pole Star like the Chinese, and could have been the prototype for both.

The kings of Assyria, unlike the kings of Babylon, never abandoned their claim to divine status. They considered themselves to be the living incarnation of Ashur, with the son replacing the dead father (19) in a manner similar to the Egyptian cycle of Horus and Osiris, or the Chinese Shang-Ti cycle. However, the kings of Assyria also considered themselves to be Babylonian, and they actually helped the kings of Babylon hold power while worshipping Marduk and the other gods of Babylon. (20) Some of the great Assyrian kings even "took the hands of Marduk" to show their fealty to Babylon, even though the kings of Babylon were their puppets. (21) Thus the commercial and religious center remained at Babylon, while the military power resided in Assyria. (22)

For Assyria was, above all, a military society. They were the first to build military roads and establish supply posts so that their army could become a long-range strike force. (23) They were also the first to practice massive terrorism, torturing their enemies and destroying cities which dared to resist them. (24) To prevent further rebellion, the survivors of the destroyed cities were forcibly resettled in other areas of the Assyrian empire. (25) Thus, the Assyrians initiated many practices found in modern totalitarian states, and the priests and the army reduced the common people to virtual slavery. (26)

It was inevitable that the totalitarian Assyrians would collide with the independent-minded Israelites, although by the time of the confrontation, Israel had long since lost the dominant military position it enjoyed under King David. David's son Solomon, while a powerful and rich ruler, had allowed Babylonian worship to filter into Israel through his foreign wives (I Ki. 11:4-6). Solomon's son Rehoboam saw the bitter fruit of his father's compromise as the ten northern tribes rebelled against him, forming a new nation and adopting an apostate form of worship (I Ki. 12: 19; 26-30). After a few generations, the northern kingdom of Israel had reverted to the Babylonian religion, with the kings worshipping the Canaanite False Seed of Woman God, Baal. (27)

Though the Lord sent prophets like Amos to warn the northern kingdom of the dangers inherent in abandoning the Lord's protection, they did not listen. Instead the kings of Israel conspired with the Aramean rulers of Damascus to destroy the still godly southern kingdom of Judah, and the Assyrians were actually used by God against apostate Israel to destroy the conspiracy. The ten tribes which comprised Israel became a vassal state of Assyria, but then they rebelled against the Assyrians. In 722 B.C. the King of Assyria, Sargon II, captured the capital of Israel, Samaria, and deported the rebellious people in accordance with standard Assyrian policy. Because the Israelites had not maintained the worship of the Lord, the "ten lost tribes of Israel" were absorbed into the population of northern Babylonia, who also worshipped Baal, and quickly disappeared from history. (28)

The story was different in Judah, the southern kingdom. The son of Sargon II, Sennacherib, moved against King Hezekiah of Judah and soon had forced the Jews to retreat behind the walls of Jerusalem. (29) He then sent a taunting threat to Hezekiah, asking "How then can the Lord deliver Jerusalem from my hand?" (Is. 36:20). But God had determined to humble the god-king of Assyria, as he had humbled the god-king of Egypt in the days of Moses. Isaiah the prophet

told Hezekiah that the Lord would keep Sennacherib from capturing Jerusalem, sending him back to the country in defeat (Is 37:33,34).

As he had done with the Egyptians, the Lord sent an angel of death to bring down the god-king. However, instead of striking his heirs, the angel struck at the pride of Assyria, its army, and one hundred eighty-five thousand men died in the Assyrian camp. A Babylonian historian associated the event with mice, and as a result, many modern writers conclude that the natural cause of death was the plague. Whatever the cause, Sennacherib never began his siege of Jerusalem and returned to his own country, just as Isaiah had prophesied. The humbled king was later murdered by his own sons. (30)

Before his death, Sennacherib had moved the Assyrian capital to Nimrod's old city of Nineveh and the name of the city became synonymous with Assyria. (31) The city name was derived from the name of the Babylonian wife of Ea, "Nina," who was often represented as a fish. The famous Assyrian queen Semiramis claimed to be a daughter of this fish god, making herself the high priestess of the mother goddess cult. (32) The Assyrian veneration of the fish symbol may explain the favorable reception given to the prophet Jonah after he was regurgitated from the mouth of a fish (Jon. 2:10). But the repentance of the city of Nineveh in response to Jonah's message was short-lived. The prophet Nahum, perhaps in response to an Assyrian invasion of Judah which was brought on by Manasseh, the backslidden son of Hezekiah, proclaimed the total destruction of Nineveh. At the height of its power, God decreed the end of Assyria.

Indeed, during the time of evil King Manasseh of Judah, the Assyrian empire had reached its peak. (34) Esarhaddon, the son of Sennacherib, added the Phoenician city of Tyre to the empire, made the Nile delta of Egypt an Assyrian province, and pushed far into Persia. (35) Assurbanipal, Esarhaddon's son, established Assyrian rule as far south as Thebes in Egypt. (36) It was then, when Assyria ruled Egypt, Judah, Syria, Babylonia, and Persia that Nahum pronounced Nineveh's doom. And within two generations, Nineveh was destroyed. (37)

The instrument of Nineveh's destruction was a long simmering conflict with the priestly Chaldean class of the city of Babylon. (38) The Chaldeans, a Semitic people from the southern coastal regions of Babylonia, had come to power in Babylon around 770 B.C. (39) They were steeped in the practice of astrology and the occult to such an extent that the name Chaldean became synonymous with occultic practices. Initially they were allied with the Assyrians, being kept in power by them. (40)

However, under Sargon II, who destroyed Samaria, and Sennacherib, who attacked Jerusalem, the Chaldeans rebelled and were defeated by the Assyrians. Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, restored Babylonian power and established one of his sons as its king. But Esarhaddon's other son, Assurbanipal, faced another rebellion from Babylon and defeated them once again. Finally, in 625 B.C., the Chaldean king Nabopolassar succeeded in freeing Babylon from the Assyrian yoke. (41)

The success of Nabopolassar galvanized popular resentment against the harsh rule of the Assyrians. Putting together a confederacy of Babylonians, Indo-European Medes from western Persia, and barbarian Scythians who had invaded Assyria from the north, Nabopolassar attacked the Assyrian heartland. In 612 B.C., the city of Nineveh fell to the Babylonians, who visited destruction on it like it had done to countless cities before. (42) It was as the prophet Nahum said:

“Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty.”
Nahum 3:19b

With the destruction of Nineveh, Babylon finally emerged as the ruler of the lands of Nimrod’s ancient empire, and the heir to the empire of the Assyrians.

And as Babylon consolidated its power, the kingdom of Judah, remnant of the once mighty empire of David, found itself targeted for destruction.

Only God could save them.

But they never asked Him to.

Babylon had already conquered them from within.

Chapter 15

Exile in Babylon

The years following the destruction of Nineveh were filled with warfare and shifting alliances as the former subject nations of Assyria struggled to find a new balance of power. The Egyptians, hoping to free themselves from the Babylonians, allied themselves with the remnants of the Assyrian army, which had been drawn into Syria west of the Euphrates River. (1) The kingdom of Judah, apparently fearful of a revival of the evil Assyrian Empire, tried to stop the Egyptian pharaoh Neco as he marched through Judah to join forces with the Assyrians. In the ensuing battle, Joash, the last godly king of Judah, was killed. (2)

Within three months, the enraged Egyptians had removed Joash’s son Jehoahaz and enthroned his more sympathetic brother Jehoiakim (2 Ki. 23:34). Then the Pharaoh joined the Assyrians at Carchemish, a city on the western reaches of the Euphrates River. There they were met by Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar, and decisively defeated in 605 B.C. Following up on his victory, Nebuchadnezzar made Judah into a vassal state, and removed a group of hostages to Babylon to secure their pledge of loyalty to him. Included among the hostages was a young man named Daniel whom God would raise up as a witness to both the Jews and the Babylonians in the face of the moral failure of Judah. (3)

For, with few exceptions, the kings of Judah had abandoned the worship of God and adopted the practices of their neighbors. Manaseh, the son of Hezekiah, had erected altars to Baal and the mother goddess Asherah, worshipping the stars as gods and placing their altars in the temple of God at Jerusalem. Worse, he practiced sorcery and divination, and even sacrificed his own son (2 Ki. 21:3-6). The prophet Ezekiel reported that the temple of God was being used for worship of Tammuz, the old Sumerian False Seed of Woman, and a sun god such as the Egyptian Ra (Ez.8:14-16). The fruit of religious apostasy was found from the greatest to the least by Jeremiah: dishonesty, adultery, violence, oppression, and rebellion (Jer. Ch. 5).

The people had abandoned God, and God was finally ready to let them suffer the consequences of their sins. He announced his decision through the prophet Jeremiah:

“Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon my servant Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, “ declares the Lord, “And I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations...this whole country will become a desolate

wasteland and they will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.”“But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,” declares the Lord, “And will make it desolate forever.”

Jer. 25:9,11,12

In other words, the people had become Babylonian on the inside, and for seventy years they would be Babylonian on the outside. When they had repented and returned to God on the inside, He would set them free.

The prophecy began to be fulfilled in the year it was given, for that was the year Nebuchadnezzar made Judah a vassal state. Then the Egyptians rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and Judah foolishly joined them. Nebuchadnezzar first defeated the Egyptians, and then besieged Jerusalem, forcing its surrender in 597 B.C. He took the king's family and about 10,000 others captive to Babylon, and installed the king's uncle, Zedekiah, on the throne. But Zedekiah also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple of Solomon which had been profaned by idol worship. (4) Most who survived the starvation, disease, and violence of the siege were carried off as slaves to Babylon (2 Ki. 25:11). And when the Babylonian governor was assassinated, the last remains of the sinful population fled to Egypt (2 Ki. 25:25,26) leaving the land a wasteland as Jeremiah had prophesied.

Babylon had at last triumphed over Israel. The nation which God had led out of Babylonian captivity in Egypt in 1446 B.C. had sold itself back to Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C., some 860 years later. But God's 70-year time clock was ticking away against Babylon, and He wanted the Babylonians to know that He was God, even while they boasted in their power over His people. So God set about to humble the Babylonians even in their greatest hour of glory.

God began His encounter with Babylon in 604 B.C. by sending Nebuchadnezzar a dream of a statue with a golden head, silver chest, bronze body, iron legs, and clay and iron feet which was toppled by a stone (Da 2:31-35). The king's Chaldean wise men could not interpret the dream (Da. 2:10,11), but God humiliated the Chaldeans by giving the young Jewish captive Daniel the interpretation (Da.2:27,28). The dream showed the successive kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, (5) and the ten nations which would rule after Rome, much the same as shown to John the Revelator in the vision of the beast with seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 17:9-14).

Even though the dream showed that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom would not last, the king recognized that the God Daniel served was the greatest God of all, (Da. 2:47) and he rewarded Daniel by making him ruler over the Chaldean wise men and the Province of Babylon (Da. 2:48). As he had done with Joseph in Egypt, God put His man in place to protect His people when they arrived in 597 B.C. and 586 B.C.

Having secured a place for His people in Babylon, God set about to secure His worship in Babylon, while humbling the state god of Babylon. For Nebuchadnezzar had constructed a large gold statue, perhaps the same one as the golden statue of Bel Marduk later described by Greek historian Heroditus. (6) At the dedication ceremony, Daniel's three Hebrew companions Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship the statue and were thrown into a furnace by Nebuchadnezzar (Da. 3:16-20). But the three were saved from the fire by God's intervention, and Nebuchadnezzar and all his officials were amazed (Da. 3:27). Faced with this display of God's power, Nebuchadnezzar decreed that none of his subjects could speak against God (Da. 3:29). So God showed Himself strong at Bel's ceremony, and the right of the Jews to worship Him was made secure.

Nebuchadnezzar built Babylon into the greatest city of the ancient world. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, it was built in a square with 15 miles on each side. The defensive walls, some 60 miles long, were 350 feet high and 87 feet thick, and no ancient army could fully encompass the walls because of their length. (7) Yet God humbled Nebuchadnezzar, for one day when he proudly looked over the city, he was rebuked from Heaven for his pride and lost his sanity (Da. 4:28-34). Only when he glorified God was his sanity returned to him (Da. 4:35,36), and the grateful king sent out a decree to his subjects, glorifying God (Da. 4:2).

By the time of Nebuchadnezzar's death in 562 B.C., God had turned the fierce enemy of His people into their protector in exile, and forced the priest-king of Babylon to acknowledge Him as the most high God. His successor, Evil-Meodrach, was oppressive and immoral, but was overthrown in a rebellion before he could do any real damage to either the Babylonians or the Jewish exiles. (8) He was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Negal Sharezer, who had helped rescue Jeremiah when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem. (9) After he died in 556 B. C., the chief officials installed the aging General Nabonidus as king, ending the dynasty of Nabopolassar. (10) And through it all, Daniel remained as a high official, powerful friend of the exiles and a voice for God.

In retrospect, Nabonidus seems to have been selected by God to bring judgment to Babylon. He was the son of a priestess of the moon god Sin, and his life's ambition had been to rebuild the ruins of his mother's temple in his homeland of Harran, in Syria. The city was held by the Medes, who had allied with Nabopolassar against Assyria in 612 B.C., and Nabonidus determined to capture the city. In order to defeat the Medes, he made one of the worst errors in judgment in all of history. He allied himself with Cyrus, the ambitious king of the Persians. When they defeated the Medes, Nabonidus got his home city of Harran while Cyrus took over the vast Median lands north of Babylonia. Nabonidus had helped to create the Persian Empire which would destroy him. (11)

When he set out for Harran, Nabonidus left his son Belshazzar in charge as King of Babylon. After capturing Harran and restoring the temple of Sin, Nabonidus moved south through Syria into Northwest Arabia, where he captured the oasis of Tamia. He remained at Tamia for ten years with his army (12), allowing Cyrus to consolidate his power. Cyrus conquered the kingdom Lydia in Southeastern Anatolia and gained power over the Ionian Greek cities of Western Anatolia, then turned east to conquer the lands of Eastern Persia, doubling the size of his empire without any Babylonian interference. (13)

Back in Babylon, Belshazzar was proving himself to be as incompetent an administrator as his father was a strategist. The country was mis-ruled and the common people suffered oppression. Many once-fertile fields were taken out of production, and there was a real threat of starvation in 546 B.C. (14) Economic records showed high inflation, and the misery of the people was compounded by a plague. (15)

All of this misfortune was blamed on Nabonidus, whose long absence in Arabia had meant that the annual "Taking the Hands of Bel" ritual had not been celebrated. To the priests of Marduk, this failure to honor Marduk was the cause of their troubles, and they were further offended by Nabonidus' support of the moon god Sin over the Babylonian national god, Marduk. (16) Thus, the powerful priesthood was alienated from Nabonidus, and, eventually, they began looking for a new king. They found their deliverer in Cyrus.

By 540 B.C. Cyrus had assimilated his conquests and invaded Babylonia. Nabonidus responded to his initial defeats by gathering the gods of the outlying cities into Babylon, further irritating the priesthood. Even when he finally did "Take the Hands of Bel" in 539 B.C., he

committed a sacrilege, which must have eliminated any remaining support among the priesthood. (17) When Cyrus's army approached the city, the massive fortifications of Nebuchadnezzar never saw action, because the priests of Babylon opened the gates to them. (18) Cyrus was greeted as a hero, and he "Took the Hands of Bel" in recognition of his new position as king of Babylon.

On the night the gates were opened to Cyrus's army, the son of Nabonidus, Belshazzar, gave a banquet, apparently unaware of the priests' treachery. While they were drinking from the vessels Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, a hand appeared and began writing (Da. 5:3-5). It was not the hand of Bel, but was the hand of God, sending his final message to Babylon. The prophet Daniel was summoned, and He interpreted the writing on the wall:

"Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.
Tekel: You have been weighed in the scales and found wanting.
Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."
Da. 5:26-28

After the overthrow of Babylon, Daniel remembered the word of Jeremiah that the desolation of Jerusalem would last 70 years, and he began praying for the restoration of his people to their land (Da. 4:1-3). Then the Lord moved on the heart of Cyrus, who issued a proclamation allowing the Jewish captives to return home (Ez. 1:1-4).

The exile was over, just as Jeremiah had said.

But for Babylon, the end of Jeremiah's 70 years was just the beginning of the end. The Persian policy of supporting the priests of Marduk was modified by Darius, who attempted to move ancient Persian religion closer to its Aryan roots. (19) The priests rebelled, and the Persian King Xerxes sacked Babylon. (20) He also wrecked the walls of Nebuchadnezzar and destroyed the statue of Marduk which was the centerpiece of Babylonian state religion. (21)

Babylon enjoyed a brief moment of hope when Alexander the Great announced plans to make Babylon his capital after he defeated the Persians. But God's decree of destruction could not be reversed by any king, and Alexander died in Babylon in 323 B.C., before he could put his plan into action. Instead of restoration, the city faced further destruction as Alexander's generals fought for control. The winning general, Seleucus, moved the capital out of Babylon to his new city of Seleucia. And one of his successors, Antiochus I, forced the whole civilian population of Babylon to move there. By the time of Christ, the city was abandoned, and even the location remained a mystery until modern times. (22)

The second part of Jeremiah's prophecy came to pass, and the city of Babylon disappeared. But the system it birthed continued on without it.

Chapter 16

PERSIAN BABYLON

The Persians who captured Babylon in 539 B.C. were still a nomadic people when the Assyrians had first come in contact with them, only three hundred years earlier. (1) They were an Iron Age people, like the Assyrians, having overthrown the Bronze Age peoples of the Iranian Plateau. (2) Speaking an Indo-European language, they were closely related to the Aryans who

had conquered India. They finally settled in the land of the Elamites, east of Babylon, where they established a city, Parsua (modern Fars), from which they drew their name “Parsuan,” or Persian. (3)

Like the Aryans, the Persians were a pastoral people, with each tribe ruled by its own king. Their social organization reflected Aryan influence through the Persian caste system, which as in India, recognized priests, warriors, farmers, and merchants, and was described using a word which meant “color.” (4) However, unlike the situation in India, the king remained in control of religious ritual and kept the priests subservient to him. (5)

For the Persian king was much more like the Chinese Emperor than the Indian tribal chiefs, even being called by the Chinese Emperor’s title, the “Son of Heaven.” (6) He was, like the Egyptian Pharaoh, the son of the sun god, whose Persian name was “Mithra.” This name is a linguistic cognate to the Indian god “Mitra,” whose name comes straight from the ancient Sumerian sun god “Mitra,” who was also known as “Shamash.” (7) Mitra was also associated with Tammuz, the False “Seed of Woman” god who was echoed in the Egyptian Osiris. And, as with Osiris in Egypt, the dead Persian king went to rule the underworld while the son became the god-king on Earth. (8)

The great father god of the Persians was originally called “Dyaosh,” a name which means “Sky Father” and is a linguistic cognate with the Aryan “Dyaus” and Greek “Zeus.” There may be a relationship with Dyaosh to Mithra, the sun god, who as Sumerian Shamash was considered to be a form of the Sumerian sky god Anu. However Dyaosh was nevertheless considered to be separate from Mithra, much as the Babylonians separated “Ea” and “Enlil.” By the beginning of the historical period, the name Dyaosh had been replaced by “Ahura,” meaning “Lord,” in much the same way as the name “Bel,” or “Baal,” meaning “Lord,” became popular in Babylon and Canaan. To the name “Ahura” was added “Mazda,” meaning “wise,” producing the most commonly seen name for the Persian god, “Ahura Mazda,” or “Wise God.” (9)

The mother goddess of the Persians was Anahita, who was known as “The Immaculate.” She was pictured with holy twigs in her hand, like the constellation Virgo, and wore the crown of Babylonian Ishtar. (10) She was in fact considered equivalent to Ishtar, the wife-mother of the False “Seed of Woman.” (11) Her name is similar to that of Sumerian Inana, the “Queen of Heaven.”

Probably because of their pastoral lifestyle, the ancient Persians did not build temples, but instead worshipped under the open skies, (12) like their Indo-European cousins, the Celts. Eventually one of the tribes, the Magians, assumed a priestly role and, as with the Chaldeans in Babylon, the name “Magi” came to signify a wise man. (13) Along with the Chaldeans, they practiced astrology, although, as in China, astrological divination was strictly limited to imperial matters. (14) And, no doubt because of the Babylonian influence, they finally built a ziggurat in the capital city where the king performed his priestly rituals. (15)

We have seen how Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, “Took the Hands of Bel” at the Babylonian New Year Festival, showing his submission to Babylon’s national god, in order to cement his acceptance by the Babylonian priests and people. (16) However, at the Persian New Year festival, he took his place as the “Son of Heaven,” sacrificing to his father Mithra along with the gods Ahura Mazda and Anahita. Thus, he was like the king of Assyria, thinking himself a god, but honoring the gods of Babylon for political purposes. (17)

Cyrus’s son Cambyses also “Took the Hands of Bel,” and, when he had conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. he attempted to ingratiate himself to the Egyptians by taking the role of Horus, becoming the pharaoh. However, Cambyses failed to achieve acceptance in Egypt as his father

had in Babylon. (18) He had attacked the Egyptian priesthood and was accused of sacrificing the sacred Apis-Osiris bull of Egypt in a Mithraic ceremony. (19) More importantly, he cut off royal funding for the priesthood. Because of these religious insults, the Egyptians became implacable enemies to the Persians, and became a constant threat to revolt. It was this threat that God used to reestablish Israel in its land.

For the Jews had been strong supporters of the Persians, even before Cyrus conquered Babylon and allowed the exiles to return home. (20) What better way for the Persians to protect themselves against the Egyptians than to strengthen the Jews in Israel? So we find that Darius, successor to Cambyses, named Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, as governor of Judah and encouraged rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. (22) Interestingly, the new temple was completed in 516 B.C., 70 years after the old temple was destroyed. (23) The famous promise, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit” was given to Zerubbabel (Zech. 4:6) to show how God could bring about His promise even though His people were weak and powerless under Persian rule.

It has been suggested that Darius, the successor to Cambyses, was sympathetic toward the monotheistic Jews because he had come under the influence of Zoroaster, (24) a priest of Ahura Mazda who tried to make Ahura Mazda the sole god of Persia. (25) Zoroaster taught a doctrine of salvation by works, where good and evil forces could be controlled through proper thought. The father of King Darius was one of Zoroaster’s earliest converts, naming his son “Daraya Vohumanah,” meaning “he who sustains good thought.” (26)

The evidence indicated that Darius himself was, at best, only a lukewarm Zoroastrian, rejecting their harsh restrictions and continuing to honor the other gods of Persia. However, he did agree with the demands of the Persian priests to purge the influence of the priests of Babylon. As a result, the priests of Babylon incited frequent revolts in the city, culminating in the destruction of the temple of Marduk and much of the city under Darius’ son Xerxes. (27) Thus did God begin to bring about the promised destruction of the city of Babylon.

But while Babylon was suffering under God’s curse, He was busy building up and establishing His people, the Jews. During the reign of King Xerxes, God delivered the Jews from destruction through the actions of Queen Esther (Es. 9:1-4). It was under Xerxes’ son Artaxerxes that Ezra, in 458 B.C., was given the command to rebuild Jerusalem, perhaps for fear of another Egyptian rebellion. Also, under Artaxerxes, Nehemiah was sent to Jerusalem in 445 B.C. to rebuild the walls. (28) So while the Persians were tearing down the city of Babylon, they also were busy building up God’s city of Jerusalem.

God blessed the Persians for their kindness to His people. They ruled an empire which covered Egypt, Israel, Syria, Anatolia, Thrace, the Southern Steppes of Russia, Babylon, Persia, and the Indus River Valley. (29) No one before or since has ruled all of these lands—the original homelands of the Hamitic, Semitic, and Japethetic tribes after their dispersion from the Tower of Babel. But kings change, and empires can lose their blessing, and it was only a matter of time before history moved on.

Back in the third year of Babylonian King Belshazzar’s reign, the prophet Daniel had a vision of a ram and a goat. The ram at first prevailed over all opponents (Dan. 8:4), and Daniel was told that the ram represented Media and Persia (Dan 8:20). Suddenly a goat appeared, coming from the west, and the goat trampled down the ram (Dan 8:7). Thus, even before the Persians had liberated them, God wanted His people to know that the Persian Empire would itself be overthrown. God also wanted His people to know what was coming, so they would not be washed away in the tempest.

To the west of the Persian Empire, a storm was brewing, fed by centuries of intermittent war between the Persians and the Greeks.

The god-king of Greece was about to challenge the god-king of Persia.

Chapter 17

THE COMING OF THE GREEKS

The Greeks traced their ancestry back to Hellen, a son of the Greek Noah Deucalion. Hellen's three sons were said to have fathered the main three tribes of Greece, and the Greeks called themselves by the name "Hellenes" after Hellen. The name "Greek" means "worshippers of the gray one," a reference to moon worship similar to that of their Celtic European cousins.

(1)

With the collapse of the Bronze Age, the Celts moved west, while the Greeks moved south, destroying the Mycenaean civilization of Ancient Greece and the Minoan civilization of Crete.

(2) The Greeks were Iron Age warriors who conquered the lands of the Bronze Age god-kings, establishing a crude form of democratic rule where the armed citizens held power in the communities. (3) Because of their fierce independence, the communities jealously guarded their sovereignty, becoming known as "city states." There were as many as 1500 independent communities in the Greek world, (4) which grew to include the Aegean Islands, the coastland of Anatolia, Southern Italy, Sicily, and the coastal areas of the Black Sea. (5)

During the period after the conquest of Greece, known as the Greek "Dark Age," the diffusion of power prevented the development of both a national government and a national priesthood. (6) Even within the city-states, power was normally shared among a few ruling families. The head of each family was the priest of the family, although there was normally a chief priest for each city who was known as the "Archon." (7) The citizens did not enjoy freedom in the modern sense, but power was wielded by the community itself, rather than by kings and priests. (8)

The chief god of the Greeks was Zeus, a name which means "to shine" and is a linguistic cognate with the Aryan sky god, "Dyaus" as well as the Germanic "Tiwaz" and the Celtic "Nuada." (9) To this Indo-European sky god, the Greeks added beliefs of the Mycenaean and Cretans they had conquered, (10) as the religious patchwork which would become the famous Greek mythology began to develop. (11) They imported the sun god, Apollo, who was second only to Zeus, from Asia Minor, along with Aphrodite, the Greek Isis. (12) The goddess of Athens, Athena, may have originated in Egypt, surviving the Iron Age conquest of the Egyptian colonies in Greece. (13)

At this early stage of Greek development, the False "Seed of Woman" was not a king, but was found in the figure of Heracles, a virgin-born son of Zeus who suffered and became a god. Heracles thus usurped many features of the ancient stellar story of Christ, and was widely worshipped by the Greeks. (14) In time, some Greek rulers like the Macedonian kings began to trace their ancestry to Heracles, claiming to be "Zeus-born." (15) Further, many leading families claimed to be descended from Heracles, some other son, or Zeus, thereby laying the groundwork for the future return of the god-king to Greece. (16)

By the end of the "Dark Age," about 700 B.C., the Greeks had begun to build great temples for their gods. These were not places of worship, but instead were intended to be habitations for

the gods, bringing Heaven to Earth, just as the original Babylonian Ziggurats were. (17) As with Babylon, the statue of the god was removed from the temple on feast days. There are also records that the Babylonian ritual of sacred marriage was practiced by the priestly Archons. (18)

The greatest cultic center for Greek religion, the Oracle at Delphi, was also established at the end of the Greek Dark Age. (19) Here the sun god Apollo was reported to have killed the giant snake Python, and he spoke through priestesses known as “Pythia,” or “Lady Pythoness.” (20) Interestingly, the name “Python” means “Rot” in Greek, and it is fair to say that the Pythonesses gave out some pretty “rotten” advice. (21) The Greek king of Lydia, Croesus, was lured to his death by a prophecy that encouraged him to attack Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire. Some even suggested that the Oracles were bribed by the Persians to discourage resistance to them. (22)

After Cyrus destroyed Croesus in 547 B.C., he inherited the rulership of the Greek city-states in Anatolia, beginning a long period of conflict between the Greeks and Persians. Cyrus also discovered that the independent nature of the Greeks insured that they were not capable of unified action. (23) Furthermore, the Greek cities were interested in commercial pursuits, not empire building, and could be bribed or bullied into submission. Soon the Persians had taken all of the Greek cities in Anatolia into their empire. (24)

The European Greeks became a target for the Persians when they incited the Anatolian Greeks into a short-lived rebellion in 500 B.C. However, invasions of Europe by Darius in 490 B.C. and Xerxes in 480 B.C. met with surprising defeats, in part, because the fractious Greeks achieved a measure of unity in the face of the Persian threat. (25) But there was another reason that the Greeks were victorious, and it had to do with the military tactics developed by the Greeks in their frequent warfare with each other. Basically, they had learned to fight in a heavily armored, dense infantry formation known as a Phalanx and to accept the risk of very high casualties if defeated. (26) Since most other ancient armies were less disciplined and not prepared to risk all in a close battle, the Greek Phalanx tactic was unbeatable. The Persians withdrew and, having learned the value of Greek tactics, began to hire Greek mercenaries to stiffen their armed forces. This marked the beginning of the Greek advance into Asia. (27)

Once the crisis was past, the Greek city-states fell back into their bickering. War broke out between the Spartans and the Athenians, along with their allies, which ravaged Greece from 431 B.C. to 404 B.C. Sparta emerged victorious, but was itself defeated in 371 B.C. by Thebes, leaving the Greek states in upheaval again. (28) But while the Southern Greek states were fighting among themselves, the military balance of power was shifting to the north, to the semi-barbaric Greek kingdom of Macedonia. (29) In 338 B.C., King Phillip II of Macedonia defeated the armies of Southern Greece and, for the first time in its history, Greece was united under a common king. (30)

Like many other Greek rulers, the kings of Macedon claimed to be “Zeus-born” through descent from the False “Seed of Woman,” Heracles. (31) Phillip II, however, began maneuvering himself toward full recognition as a god when he built a shrine dedicated to himself and his wife at Delphi. (32) Later, he encouraged the Ephesians to place a statue of him in the temple to Artemis. (33) His wife, Olympias, kept snakes in her quarters, which were later considered to be a form of a god who immaculately conceived her son, Alexander. (34) The stage was set, but Phillip II was assassinated in 336 B.C. before he could make his move. (35) It was to be Alexander, his son, known to history as “Alexander the Great” who brought divine kingship to the Greeks.

Before his death, Phillip II had begun to organize an invasion of the Persian Empire, ostensibly to avenge prior Persian wrongs, but actually to provide a focal point to perpetuate his power. (36) To justify the invasion, Phillip II began a propaganda campaign designed to appeal to the Greek feeling of cultural superiority. Even the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who was a teacher to Alexander, followed the party line. Sounding like a Greek Nazi, he wrote that the “barbarians” (i.e. Persians) were slaves by nature and were, in fact, “subhuman.” This was the beginning of the overt racism which has been a strong undercurrent in western civilization. (37)

Alexander was only 20 years old when he became King of Macedonia, but he forcefully established himself as ruler of Greece. He was committed to his father’s plan to invade the Persian Empire, and in 334 B.C. he crossed into Asia. (38) After an early victory at Granicus gave Alexander control of Western Asia Minor, Persian King Darius III determined to personally command an army against Alexander. (39) The two met in Syria at Issus, and when Darius III fled from Alexander’s attack aimed at him personally, the Persian army crumbled. (40) Darius fled to Babylon, and Alexander was left in control of Western Asia. (41)

While Darius was busy raising another army in Babylon, Alexander moved down the Mediterranean coast to consolidate his power. Most cities welcomed him, and he responded by leaving their leaders in place. (42) It was during this march south that the Jewish elders showed Alexander Daniel’s prophecy of the coming of the Greeks, and he spared Jerusalem. (43) The Phoenician city of Tyre, on the other hand, refused to submit to Alexander, and he utterly destroyed it just as Zechariah had prophesied. (Zech. 9:1-8). (44)

Even Alexander was surprised by the enthusiastic response of the Egyptians, who hated the Persians and looked upon Alexander as a liberator. More than that, however, the Egyptians crowned Alexander as Pharaoh, the Horus god-king of Egypt. He was told by the oracle at Siwa that he was the son of Zeus, fathered by the god through the snakes kept by his mother. From that point forward, Alexander considered himself to be a god and expected to be revered as a god. The Babylonian institution of divine kingship had finally triumphed in the Greek world. (45)

The acceptance of the Greek king as Pharaoh by the Egyptians highlighted another major shift in the ancient world, toward mixture of the religious traditions of the peoples. This mixing of religious traditions had begun under the Persians, where, for the first time, Greeks, Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians had been mingled together under one king. Thus, the national religious traditions, which heretofore had been united under the god kings of the nations, became subservient to the great god-king of the empire, leaving the people free to adopt other religious traditions. During this period, we find Babylonians accepting Persian gods, Egyptians accepting Babylonian gods, Greeks adopting oriental gods and frequent intermarrying between members of different national traditions. (46)

Under the Greeks, this mixture reached new dimensions, as Alexander and his successors continued to tolerate local traditions, while the peoples mixed with one another even more under Greek rule than they did under the Persians. The priests, ever jealous of their power, intensified the secretiveness of rituals, strengthening the “mystery religion” aspect of the Babylonian System. (47) Of course, the secret rituals of the “mystery religions” led initiates to the understanding that their god was the promised “Seed of Woman.” And, as head over all of these traditions, stood the god-king, who tolerated worship of the gods of the nations as long as he was honored as a god as well.

The new god-king, Alexander, went on from Egypt to destroy the Persian Empire, just as Daniel had foretold (Dan. 8:7). The Babylonians honored him as a god, like the Egyptians,

because he had promised to restore the city and its temples which had suffered at the hands of the Persians. But the Persians refused to recognize him as their god-king in place of Darius, and in frustration, he destroyed their capital, Persepolis. (48) After extending his conquests into India, where the god-priest Brahmans opposed his claim to be a god-king, (49) he returned to Babylon to make it his capital. (50) But at Babylon, Alexander was moving against God's plan to destroy the city, and it was at Babylon that he was stricken by a mysterious disease and died in the prime of his life in 323 B.C. (51)

Upon Alexander's death, the second part of Daniel's prophecy about the Greeks began to unfold. For the goat in Daniel's vision had its single horn (Alexander) broken off, and four lesser ones grew in its place (Dan. 8:8). Just as prophesied, four of Alexander's generals divided up his empire as they engaged in bloody wars for dominance. (52) The city of Babylon, instead of being rebuilt, was further damaged by the fighting. (53) The victor at Babylon was General Seleucus, who made sure of his power by killing Alexander's only son. (54) He proclaimed himself to be a god-king, a son of the Greek sun god Apollo, much as Nimrod had believed himself to be descended from the sun god at the beginning of Babylon. The other generals, not wishing to be outdone, declared themselves gods as well. (55)

It was inevitable that the Greek god-kings, demanding worship, would come into conflict with the worshippers of the true God. In 168 B. C., the ruler of the Seleucid Empire, Antiochus Epiphanes, set up an altar to "Zeus-Pater" ("Father Zeus") in the temple in Jerusalem, devastating the city and persecuting the faithful. The Jewish people revolted, gaining their independence for the first time in 430 years in 167 B.C. The temple itself was liberated and purified in 165 B.C., in a ceremony which was celebrated as the Feast of Dedication, or Hanukah. (56) The prophet Daniel had warned them of this time in his vision of the ram and the goat, even specifying the 1150 days the temple was desecrated (Da. 8:9-14). The Jews were free, but only for a while.

For Daniel had also warned of another kingdom which would succeed the Greek kingdoms. This kingdom was described as an iron beast, trampling the other kingdoms underfoot (Da. 7:7).

The ultimate Iron Age Kingdom, and the successor to the city of Babylon, had begun its long march across the stage of history.

Chapter 18

ROME: THE KINGDOM OF IRON

The first settlers in the area of Rome were the Etruscans, who had apparently been a part of the first wave of European settlement, and who found copper resources north of Rome. (1) About 1000 B.C., the Latins arrived, (2) bringing Iron Age technology from the Danube Valley. The city of Rome was birthed from the mixing of the Etruscans, who formed the upper classes, and the Latins who worked the land. (3)

The Etruscans were very cosmologically oriented people, establishing twelve "sacred kings" based on their cosmological principles. Their sky god, Tinia, was similar to Zeus, but also was represented by the North Polar Star, as Shang-Ti and Assur were. The ancestral god-king of the Etruscans ruling over the twelve "sacred kings," was named "Tarchon," and the first kings of Rome were called "Tarquins" after their legendary ancestor. (4)

The Romans soon developed their own tradition, based on the legendary founding of the city by the twins Romulus and Remus. The twins were born to a virgin, fathered by Mars, the son of the sky god, and thus were False "Seed of Woman" figures. Romulus killed his brother Remus and set the city on the Palatine Hill in Rome in 753 B.C. (5) After starting the city, Romulus was taken up into the clouds, becoming part of the Roman godhead. As a god, he was called Quirinus, and was deified as the first god-king of Rome. (6) Later the legend was added that Romulus was descended from Aeneas, a hero of the Trojan War who was a son of the goddess Venus. (7) Thus, the Roman kings claimed ancestry from Quirinus, the son of Mars, and from Venus, both of which came from the chief sky god, Jupiter.

The name Jupiter derived from the same root as Greek "Zeus," the Indo-European "Dius," meaning "sky." The second part of the name, "Piter," means "Father," so the name Jupiter (Zeus-Piter) simply means "Sky Father." As such, Jupiter is identical with Babylonian and Persian Mitra, Chinese Shang-Ti, and Egyptian Ra. It was his son, Mars, who fathered the first god-king of Rome, Romulus. In later times Jupiter became equated with Greek Zeus, and Mars with the Greek war god "Ares." (8)

The first goddess of Rome was "Diana," a name which is the feminine version of the Indo-European "Dius," and which means "Light." (9) Later on she was associated with the Greek "Artemis," the moon goddess of the Ephesians. (10) Apparently her place as consort to the chief sky god Jupiter was taken by the goddess "Juno," who was a sky goddess associated with the Greek wife of Zeus, "Hera." Eventually the Romans adapted most of the Greek mythology into their Pantheon, showing a talent for borrowing from the traditions of other peoples, which was to be a hallmark of Rome. (11)

Another Greek innovation adopted by the Romans was their rejection of the god-king in favor of more widely shared power. In 509 B.C. the kings were driven out, but the Romans did not adopt a democracy, as the Greeks did. Instead, they involved the leading families in a limited representative government through the institution of the Senate, which appointed the executive officers of Rome. As the replacement of the god-king, the Senate considered itself to be the intermediary between god and man, like the Babylonian priesthood. It also appointed the chief priest of Rome, known as the "Pontifex Maximus," who ruled over the priests and performed religious rituals on the part of the state. Interestingly, the name "pontifex" means "bridge builder" and echoes the meaning of "Babylon" as a "gate" or "bridge" to the gods. (12)

The Romans also borrowed heavily from the Greeks in the art of warfare, learning to use dense infantry formations like the Phalanx, but actually improving upon Greek tactics with increased mobility. (13) The Romans had to learn to fight not only against their neighbors the Etruscans and the other Latin cities, but they also faced Celtic invasions from the north and Greek incursions in the south. (14) Warfare became a constant occupation for the Romans, and they learned how to turn it toward their economic advantage. In time, conquest became the main business of Rome, with each new victory bringing in more tribute, more lands to settle, and more slaves to work the menial jobs of Rome. (15)

More than any other ancient people, the Romans succeeded in creating a professional army. It was well organized and self-sufficient, depending on a professional officer corps with generations of tactical knowledge, rather than the hit or miss capabilities of the nobility. To this storehouse of expertise was added another ingredient: terrorism. The Romans were, in fact, the most ruthless terrorists in history, excepting perhaps for the Mongol warlords. Resistance, to the Romans, justified slaughter of civilian and soldier alike, and few cities found it worthwhile to risk the destruction which would most certainly follow any act of defiance. (16) The prophet

Daniel was quite accurate in his description of the Romans as an iron beast, crushing, devouring, and trampling others underfoot (Da. 7:7).

By 265 B.C., Rome had conquered all of Italy, defeating the Celts in the north and the Greeks in the south. (17) Rome was catapulted into the international arena in the next year when they sent forces to Sicily to oppose the Phoenician Carthaginians, beginning the first of three wars between Rome and Carthage. (18) Carthage was the daughter city of Tyre, having become the leading Phoenician city after Tyre was destroyed by Alexander the Great. Like the Tyrrians, the Carthaginians practiced child sacrifice, at one time sacrificing five hundred children when besieged by the Greeks. (19) And, like the Tyrrians, they were subject to God's judgment (Zec. 9:4). The Romans totally destroyed Carthage by 146 B.C., taking over the Carthaginian Empire in Spain and the western Mediterranean. (20) Wisely, the Romans outlawed the Carthaginian practice of child sacrifice. (21)

The wide-ranging wars between Rome and Carthage had brought the mainland Greeks into conflict with Rome, and the Romans soon carried the battle to the Greek homeland. By 196 B.C. the European Greeks had accepted Roman rule. An attempt by the Greek kingdom of Asia Minor to drive the Romans out of Greece backfired and instead, brought them into Asia Minor and Syria. The last Greek kingdom, Egypt, lasted until the time of the Caesars, but it too was brought under Roman control. (22)

Through the Greek conquests, Roman influence finally reached the borders of Israel, where the Romans waited for an opportune moment. That moment came when two rival factions claimed the Jewish high priesthood and rulership, starting a civil war in Israel. (22) The Romans, under Pompey, intervened in the conflict and captured Jerusalem by siege in 63 B.C. (24) Israel became a Roman protectorate, ruled by the Idumean (a Syro-Phoenician people) Antipater, who claimed to be Jewish through the earlier conversion of his people. Thus, through dissension among God's people, they were turned over to foreign kings and the power of Rome. (25)

As the power of Rome grew by its military exploits, so power in Rome came more and more to depend upon support of the army. Senatorial government left a power vacuum at the top, and ambitious men saw that absolute power could be obtained through force of arms. The first Roman to reach this pinnacle of power was Julius Caesar, whose name is even today synonymous with kingship. (26)

Julius Caesar was a military genius, similar to Alexander the Great. Caesar proved himself in his campaigns against the Celtic peoples of Gaul, a province which now occupies most of the modern country of France. Here, against much larger forces, he waged a brutal Roman war which cost the lives of perhaps two million Celts, and emerged as master of Gaul. From Gaul, he marched his army into Italy in 49 B.C., demanding absolute power and defeating his rival Pompey in a bloody civil war. Caesar had triumphed, but his victory was short-lived. On the Ides of March, 44 B.C., he was assassinated by members of the Senate, which he had hoped to make a superfluous institution. (27)

However, before his death, Julius Caesar had concluded, as had Nimrod of Babylon, that he needed the image of divinity to enhance his power. (28) His first move was to obtain the all-important office of "Pontifex Maximus," the chief priest of Roman state religion. His famous dalliance with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt almost certainly acquainted him with the Egyptian Pharaonic religion which had such a profound effect on Alexander the Great and his pretensions of divinity. When his plans were cut short by assassination, his successor Augustus realized the

value of divine kingship and declared Julius Caesar to be a god in 42 B.C., building a magnificent temple in his honor. (29)

Augustus Caesar, grandnephew and successor to Julius Caesar, fought a lengthy civil war and finally gained undisputed control of the Roman Empire in 27 B.C. He named himself as the divine successor to the Egyptian Pharaohs, but did not demand worship in the wider Roman empire at that time. (30) He continued preparing the way for his deification, claiming the office “Pontifex Maximus” in 12 B.C., which office remained with the Caesars thereafter. (31) Augustus claimed to be related to Apollo, the sun god, (32) and solar worship became absorbed into emperor worship as “Sol Invictus,” the “Unconquered Sun.” (33) Thus, while he was not officially deified until his death, Augustus ruled as a god-king in his life, as did his successors. Babylonian kingship had returned to Rome.

Rome, in fact, became heir to the Babylonian System to such an extent that Scripture uses “Babylon” as a code name for Rome. (Rev. 17:9) The mixing of religious traditions, begun as Persia and Greece mixed peoples of the old Babylonian national religions, only accelerated under the Romans, as they sought to integrate these peoples into their empire. Thus, we find the Middle Eastern mother-goddess Cybele accepted in Rome in 204 B.C., with Persian Mithra becoming popular with the army in the first century A.D. (34) Even the Phoenician gods of the despised Carthaginians, Tanit and Baal, became popular in Rome during the reign of Augustus. (35) And the Egyptian Isis, perhaps because of her connection with Pharaonic worship, was honored throughout the Roman Empire as the “Queen of Heaven.” (36) Divination and astrology were widely practiced, and the Romans even practiced a form of ancestor worship. (37) Any belief was, in fact, acceptable so long as the Emperor was honored as a god. (38)

The reign of Caesar Augustus actually marks the greatest extent of the power of the Babylonian System throughout the world. Babylonian Rome had, of course, taken over the nations of the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Greeks, and many of the Celtic lands. To the east, the Parthians held Persia under their god-kings, (39) and India remained firmly under the power of its Hindu god-priests. (40) The Chinese emperors ruled as god-kings under the Han Dynasty, (41) while the god-kings of the Maya and Andes peoples ruled in the Americas. (42) The Barbarian peoples bordering those nations lived under Babylonian Shamanistic systems of varying degrees of sophistication. The Jews, God’s people sent to liberate the world, had instead become Roman subjects because of their failure to unite under God. The Babylonian System had triumphed, or so it seemed.

But the mixing of peoples and beliefs, which had spread Babylonian traditions throughout the Roman Empire, had also removed the national barriers which had prevented Godly beliefs from penetrating. The Jewish Diaspora had established believing communities in these nations, and Caesar had ordered his subjects to allow them freedom of worship because of his desire to secure his borders against the Parthians. (43) With political unity and the Greek language as a common tongue, the Roman world was wide open to God’s messengers. (44) When the time came, Caesar’s empire was undermined before he knew what had happened.

And the Lord, always willing to make His enemies do His work, even used Caesar Augustus to start the plan in motion:

“In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world...so Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the House of David.”

Luke 2:14

Thus did Augustus cooperate with God's plan by sending Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, where the Christ was to be born. (Mk.5:2)

For the one thing that Caesar never imagined was that the real God-King would come to Earth.

And no one, whether friend or foe, was prepared for what happened when He came.

PART FIVE: THE SEED OF WOMAN COMES

“See, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

Revelation 5:5b

“I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder,” Come!” I looked, and there before me was a white horse! It's rider held a bow and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.”

Revelation 6:1,2

Chapter 19

The Revolutionary

The purpose for which Christ came to Earth was nothing less than the complete overthrow of the kingdom of darkness. (I Jn. 3:8)

In the beginning, God had given the first man, Adam, dominion over the Earth. (Ge 1:28) Adam and his wife Eve had direct fellowship with God, knowing Him face to face. (Ge. 3:8) Yet they wanted to be like God Himself, and so rebelled against God's commandment to avoid the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Ge. 3:5,6) They did gain some of the knowledge they sought, but in so doing they lost their home, lost their intimacy with God, and eventually lost their lives. (Ge. 3:22,23) Sin and death had entered the world, putting humanity in slavery to Satan. (He. 2:14,15) But God gave the promise that the Seed of Woman would come to destroy Satan, (Ge. 3:15) giving hope to the righteous people of the ancient world.

Eventually, as we have seen, Satan succeeded in perverting even the great promise of the Seed of Woman. At Babylon, the religion of the False Messiah was brought forth, spawning the Babylonian System, which separated men from God, and placed them under the control of their kings and priests. Satan's offer to give the kingdoms of the world to Jesus (Lk. 4:5-6) was no idle boast. But Jesus came to destroy Satan's kingdom, while, at the same time, offering salvation to the people of the world to liberate them from the darkness that dominated them. (Jn. 3:16-21) So Jesus entered the world as the greatest revolutionary of all time, espousing the overthrow of the Babylonian world government, while offering amnesty to its human allies and subjects.

Babylon was, of course, ever vigilant against rivals, and never more so than at the time of Christ. Rome, the successor to the old city of Babylon, was the most ferocious of the ancient

empires, ruthlessly crushing any opposition. (1) And the Roman vassal king in Christ's land of Israel, Herod the Great, was considered brutal even by Roman standards, killing even his own children when he feared their rivalry. So when the wise men from the East came to Herod seeking Baby Jesus, the one born King of the Jews, Herod's ruthless order to kill all the babies in Bethlehem came as no surprise. (Matt. 2:16) But God sent His warning ahead of Herod's soldiers, (Matt. 2:13) Baby Jesus escaped to Egypt, (Matt. 2:14,15) and Herod was dead within a year. (2)

Jesus was, in fact, King of the Jews through the lineage of King David, fulfilling God's promise to David of an everlasting dynasty. (2 Sa. 7:16) Mary, the mother of Jesus, was descended from David through David's son Nathan (3) (Lk. 3:3) while Joseph, whom people thought to be the father of Jesus, was descended through Nathan's brother, King Solomon. (4) (Mk. 1:7) Of course, as the "Seed of Woman," Jesus had no human father, but was born of a virgin as prophesied. (Matt. 1:22-23) He may have been a revolutionary, but He was no usurper, for the kingdom He claimed really did belong to Him.

In the year 26 A.D., when He reached age 30 and was considered mature, Jesus began His public ministry. (5) This date was 483 years, or 69 periods of 7 years, from the date of the decree to restore Jerusalem given to Ezra in 458 B.C., exactly as Daniel had prophesied. (6) (Da. 9:25) In that same year, Caesar Tiberius, the successor to Augustus, left the city of Rome, never to return, ruling in absentia from the island of Capri. (7) Perhaps he felt his kingdom shaking.

Jesus' message was simple: "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17) Here was a clear, unambiguous challenge to the kingdom of Babylon, a call for its overthrow by the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet Jesus refused to organize any kind of political or military movement, even hiding from those who wanted to make Him king by force. (Jn. 6:13) This most peculiar Revolutionary refused even to defend Himself when the forces of Babylon finally came to arrest Him. (Matt. 26:50-56) Even His closest friends could not grasp the power of His plan. (Jn. 16:18)

The power of God's plan can begin to be seen with the understanding that the Kingdom of God is established in the hearts of His people. (Lk 17:20) We must repent from our worldly ways, making an inward change, which Jesus compared with being born again. (8) Indeed, each believer is promised that his dead spirit will be brought to life through Christ. (Col. 2:13) The power of this inward change allows us to put earthly sins behind and set our minds on things above. (Col. 3:1-17) Thus, we enter the Kingdom of Heaven while we yet live on Earth.

Entry into the Kingdom of Heaven produces a complete repudiation of the Babylonian System in the believer. The religion of Babylon is overthrown on every point, as shown in the listing of the core Babylonian characteristics below:

1. Separation of God and man by priestly intermediaries.

Jesus came to give his followers the right to become children of God, (Jn 1:12) and, as such, to enjoy direct fellowship with Him. We do not need to ask a priest to speak to God for us, because Jesus said we can ask of the Father in Jesus' name and it will be given to us. (Jn. 15:16) We are led by the Spirit of God, not by men, and we are not slaves, but are the very children of God. (Ro. 8:14-16)

2. Belief in a False Messiah, often represented by a god-king like Caesar or a god-priest like the latter kings of Babylon.

Jesus, of course, is acknowledged as the real and only “Seed of Woman” by believers, for “There is no other name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Ac. 4:12) Those who would be leaders are admonished not to exalt themselves but instead to be humble servants. (Mat. 20:25-28) Religious leaders are told not to call themselves “Father,” “Master,” or “Teacher,” but to remember that the greatest of them is a servant to all. (Mat. 23:8-12)

3. Deification of the mother of the “Seed of Woman”

Jesus made it clear that His mother Mary was not to be deified when He responded to a woman who offered adoration to Mary by saying “Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it” (Lu. 11:28) On another occasion He said “For whoever does the will of my Father in Heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mat. 12:50) We are all His family, as children of God, but only Jesus is God, (Col. 1:15-20) and He is the only way to reach God. (Ac. 4:12)

4. Displacement of God the Father as the object of worship

Jesus, though He was God, was sent by the Father, (Jn. 8:16) and spoke only that which the Father taught Him. (Jn. 8:28) He revealed the Father to us, (Jn. 17:6) and when He left, He returned to the Father (Jn. 17:13) And He confirmed that the greatest of the commandments was “Love the Lord Your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Mat. 22:37)

5. Using sympathetic magic to bring the deities of Heaven to Earth through idols, ziggurats, pyramids, temples, labyrinths, and other devices.

The understanding that the kingdom of God is in us has profound implications for our understanding of “sacred places.” Jesus prayed that, just as He and the Father were one, so the believers would be one with the Father and Him. (Jn. 17:21) He also promised that the Holy Spirit would live in the believers after He returned to the Father. (Jn. 14:17) Our bodies are members of Christ Himself, (I Cor. 6:15) and we are temples of the Holy Spirit of God. (I Cor. 6:19) Heaven is always with us, and the sacred place is in our hearts.

6. Worship of heavenly bodies and practices of astrology and divination

The Scriptures say that those who worship the created things rather than the Creator refuse to glorify God or give thanks to Him (Ro. 1:21-25) The apostle Paul warns us that those who practice idolatry and witchcraft will not inherit the Kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:20-21)

The Kingdom of Heaven, though received inwardly, produces a life of power which cannot be hidden. (Mat. 5:14) This power was first manifested in Jesus, who began His ministry by healing the sick and casting out demons. (Mat 4:23-24) He felt compassion for the crowds who followed Him because, in His human limitations, He could only be in one place at a time. (Mat. 9:36-37) So He sent out His twelve disciples to heal and announce the Kingdom of Heaven, multiplying Himself twelve-fold. (Lk. 9:12) Later, He sent out seventy-two others, further multiplying the Kingdom of Heaven. (Lk. 10:1) Yet His healing miracles offended and frightened many in the priestly classes, and they began to plot against Him. (Mat. 12:14)

In the spring of 30 A.D., Jesus went to Jerusalem (9) for what He knew would be the culmination of His ministry, His power confrontation with the Babylonian System. (Lk. 18:31-33) A large crowd welcomed Him to the city, calling upon Him as “the King who comes in the

Name of the Lord.” (Lk. 19:38) He then entered the temple area, driving out the moneychangers and healing the sick. (Mat. 21:12-14) But the priests and leaders of Jerusalem had already determined to kill Jesus because they feared that the people would follow Him and cause a rebellion, which would lead to their removal by the Romans. (Jn. 11:48-53) They looked for a way to trap Him, but they were afraid of the people. (Lk. 22:2)

Finally, one of the disciples agreed to betray Jesus, probably because He was disappointed with Jesus’ refusal to initiate armed rebellion against Rome. (10) Judas led them to Jesus’ night encampment, away from the crowds who surrounded Him, and He was arrested without resisting. (Mat. 26:47-56) That night He was taken before the high priest and elders, where He answered truthfully that He was the Christ, the Son of God. (Mat. 26:59-64) For this, He was condemned to die. (Mat. 26:65,66)

But under Roman law, the Jewish leaders did not have the authority to execute anyone. That right was reserved only to the Romans, who wanted to make sure that none of their allies could be falsely accused and killed by local authorities. (11) So Jesus was taken to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor who had been appointed in the same year Jesus began His ministry. Pilate had offended the Jews in the early years of his reign by bringing images of the god-king Caesar into Jerusalem, within sight of the temple, and hanging up golden shields with the names of Roman gods in his palace on Mount Zion. While Pilate wisely avoided a rebellion by removing these provocations, he remained a heavy-handed ruler. (12)

Pilate was in no mood to gratify the desires of the Jewish leaders, especially after an interview with Jesus convinced him that he was not guilty of any crime. (13) Upon finding out that Jesus was from Galilee, Pilate tried to avoid the problem by sending Jesus to Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee and Perea, son of Herod the Great and murderer of John the Baptist. Herod wanted Jesus to perform a miracle for him, but Jesus refused to even answer his questions. So Herod condemned Jesus and sent Him back to Pilate, apparently earning Pilate’s gratitude for helping him with a politically delicate situation. Pilate and Herod, formerly enemies, became friends that day. (14)

Pilate, after some more pressure from the Jewish leaders and a mob they had gathered, finally gave Herod and the priests what they wanted. The rulers of Babylon had come into agreement: Jesus must be killed. The priests cried, “We have no king but Caesar!” (Jn. 19:15) But Pilate, in an ironic jab at the priests, ordered that the cross of Jesus bear a sign reading, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” (Jn. 19:19)

It was as King David prophesied: (16):

“The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord, and against His Anointed One.” Ps. 2:2

David also foresaw the death of Christ on the cross: “A band of evil men have encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; People stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.”

Ps. 22:16-18

Yet, none thought of the second part of David’s second Psalm: “I will proclaim the decree of the Lord. He said to me ‘You are my son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.’”

Ps. 2:7-8

Babylon had killed the Revolutionary.
But the Revolution was just beginning.

Chapter 20

Revolution in Babylon

Something extraordinary happened to the followers of Jesus after He was crucified. None of them had stood with Him in His trial, and the leader of the disciples, Peter, had even denied knowing Him. Their hopes and dreams were shattered by the shameful death of Christ on a Roman cross, and now they huddled in fear, hoping that the authorities were not after them as well. Yet, somehow they were transformed from cowardice, defeat, and despair into a force that shook the world. (1)

The event that transformed them was the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This was totally unexpected, and the disciples did not believe the report of it until Jesus appeared to them in person. They were then able to understand the necessity of His suffering and death, for without the resurrection, there was no victory for the Kingdom of Heaven. The King of the Kingdom of Heaven was alive, proving that He was Who He said He was, and building an unshakable faith in His disciples. From that moment on, they could face death, knowing that Jesus was waiting on the other side. They, and the world, were changed forever. (2)

Even with their resurrection-ignited faith, the followers of Jesus needed to receive power from God, (Lk. 24:49) just as Jesus had received it. (Jn. 1:32) Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is God Himself, to come upon them. (Ac.1:4-5) This happened on the day of the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, and Peter, the disciple who had denied Jesus, spoke with such power and conviction that three thousand were added to the Kingdom of Heaven that very day. (Ac. 2:41) The Church, or “Assembly,” was born.

Babylon had killed one man, Jesus, Who was filled with the Holy Spirit and carried the power of God. But Jesus knew that He had to die, like a seed planted in the ground, to produce many seeds. (Jn. 12:23) Now there were three thousand filled with the Spirit, carrying the power of God, who became a continuation of Christ’s ministry almost literally as the Body of Christ. (3) They were, in fact, more powerful than Jesus, Who said that His followers would do greater works than He did after He went to be with the Father. (Jn 14:12) Babylon suddenly found itself facing three thousand people with Christ’s power, and that number was growing daily. (Ac. 2:47)

The forces of Babylon, represented by the priests and leaders in Jerusalem, began to react to this threat from the Church. At first, they tried simple intimidation (Ac. 4:18), but it only made the Church bolder. (Ac. 4:31) Then they arrested the leaders, but the angel of the Lord set them free. (Ac. 5:18,19) They had the apostles flogged, but the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus. (Ac. 5:40) Finally, they murdered Stephen, a Church leader, and began a persecution of the Church in Jerusalem. (Ac. 8:1) This action, however, spread the Church throughout Judea and Samaria as the Jerusalem church members scattered from the city to avoid the persecution. (Ac. 8:4) And one of the chief persecutors of the church, Paul, was confronted on the way to Damascus by the Lord and converted, becoming one of the leading instruments to take the Kingdom of Heaven to the non-Jewish, or Gentile, people. (Ac 9:5 & 15) Thus, the persecutions made the Church grow stronger.

The Gentile world of the Roman Empire became a fertile ground for the message of the Kingdom of God, which was preached by Paul and others. To many Romans, religion had become a set of formalities with little real devotion. (4) Belief in the local deities had also begun to decay, leaving a spiritual void that the Church could fill. (5) Further, the Romans were generally tolerant of foreign religions, treating the Church as a sect of Judaism, which was a recognized belief permitted to practice under Roman law. (6) Thus the Church spread rapidly throughout the Roman Empire, reaching Asia Minor by 48 A.D., Greece by 52 A.D., (7) and Rome itself no later than 54 A.D. (8)

Roman Babylon was slow at first to respond to the challenge. The Church was able to spread unnoticed during the reign of Tiberius, who ruled during the ministry of Jesus and the first seven years of the Church. The successor to Tiberius, Caligula, also took no notice of the Church, but he did attempt to force the Jews to place emperor-worship idols in their temples and synagogues. He had sent two legions marching toward Jerusalem to enforce his order, but he was assassinated, and his generals wisely cancelled the order, avoiding the threat of a bloodbath for both the Jews and the Church. (9) His successor, Claudius, reinstated the religious right of the Jews not to worship the emperor, but, later in his reign, he ordered the Jews expelled from the city of Rome for rioting against “Crestus,” a Roman name for Christ. (10)

During these years there had been many riots against “Crestus” as the Jewish communities that were spread throughout the Gentile world became polarized into Christian and anti-Christian groups. (11) Claudius Caesar’s Jewish friend, King Herod Agrippa, launched a severe persecution of the Church in Israel, killing James, the son of Zebedee, but the persecution ended with Agrippa’s premature death in 44 A.D. (12) Finally, under Nero Caesar, the anti-Christian Jewish faction was able to convince Rome that the Christians were not Jewish and thus were not entitled to the Jewish exemption from Roman emperor worship. (13) With this ruling, the Church lost its legal right to worship, meaning that the Church’s “secret” meetings, its adherence to the one true God, and its refusal to worship the emperor became criminal offenses under Roman law. (14) Babylon had found its weapon against the Church, and was quick to use it.

In 64 A.D., the first trial of the Church began with a fire that destroyed most of the city of Rome. It was widely believed that Nero Caesar had started the fire to provide expansion room for his palace, and Nero began looking for a scapegoat. Nero blamed the Christians for starting the fire, launching a vicious persecution in which Christians were burned alive and murdered for sport. (15) Hundreds, perhaps thousands, were killed in Rome, including the two leaders of the Church, Peter and Paul. (16) But the people of Rome, knowing Nero’s accusations against the Church to be false, began to sympathize with the Christians, so that the net effect of Nero’s persecution was to promote the Church in Rome. (17)

Babylon did not forget the Jews, whom it had always hated, and in 66 AD, the Roman Governor’s demand for tribute from the temple in Jerusalem spawned a rebellion of the Jews. (18) Outside of Judah, anti-Jewish rioting arose as local populations, making a show of loyalty to Rome, used the pretext to plunder and kill members of the Jewish community. Rome responded quickly, sending one of its best generals, Vespasian, to put down the Jewish revolt. Then, just as Vespasian was about to besiege Jerusalem, came the news that Nero had died, leaving no heir. Vespasian, a man of ambition, lifted the siege, marched on Rome, defeated his rivals, and became emperor in 69 A.D. (19)

With Vespasian’s withdrawal, war broke out between the three main political factions in Jerusalem, as each tried to take control of the city after the apparent Roman defeat. (20) They had forgotten the warning Jesus gave to His followers: “When you see Jerusalem being

surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who live in Judah flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city.” (Lu. 21:8) The Church *did* remember Christ’s warning, and used the temporary hiatus to flee from Jerusalem in accordance with His instructions. (21)

But so confident were the Jews that a great multitude ignored Christ’s warning and entered Jerusalem for the Passover celebration in 70 A.D. The Romans, regrouped under Emperor Vespasian’s son Titus, arrived outside the city on Passover Day, 70 A.D., exactly forty years on the Jewish calendar after the crucifixion of Jesus. The people, trapped between the Romans on the outside and the warring factions on the inside, were soon reduced to starvation because the food supply of the city had been destroyed by one of the warring factions. (22) Even the brutal Romans were horrified by the death and destruction of the siege, but the Jewish factions refused to surrender and save the city or its people. (23) So Titus took the city by force, slaughtering or enslaving those inhabitants who survived the starvation. He destroyed the city and its magnificent temple, (24) just as Jesus had prophesied. (Lu. 21:5, 6, 22-24)

By 70 A.D., Babylon had killed Peter and Paul, the two leading Christians, along with many others, and had destroyed the home base of the Church in Jerusalem. But the Church continued to grow because of the power of the internal Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit. In a world of hollow religious beliefs, the Christians showed conviction. They lived moral lives in a society marked by immorality. Their compassion and love for others, even their enemies, stood in stark contrast to the brutal Roman Empire. And even when they were killed for their faith, their courage convinced many of the truth of their beliefs. (25)

The Roman Emperors, as heirs to Babylon, recognized Christianity as a grave threat and many launched persecutions to suppress it. Domitian, son of Vespasian, and brother of Titus, repressed Jews and Christians, even killing some Christian members of his own household. (26) The last book of the Bible, Revelation, was written by John the disciple from the Roman penal colony on the island of Patmos in 95 A.D., toward the end of Domitian’s reign. (27) A few years later, Emperor Trajan advised his subordinates to kill confessed Christians, but did not institute any persecution to uncover them. Emperor Hadrian provoked the Jews into another unsuccessful rebellion in 132 A.D. by putting a shrine to Jupiter at the now desolate site of the temple. This rebellion was put down in 135 A.D., and Jews were forbidden to enter Jerusalem. The Christian Jews, however, avoided this disaster because the leader, Bar Kokhba, “son of the star,” claimed to be the Messiah, and they remembered Jesus’ warning against false Christs. (Mat. 24:24) Thus, by the middle of the second century, Rome appeared to be unbeatable, and was still implacably opposed to Christianity. (28)

In 160 A.D., a new enemy faced Rome—smallpox. The outbreak of plague lasted 15 years, bringing heavy mortality and beginning a 500-year population decline in the Roman world. During the plague, the Christians cared for the sick, saving many lives by simply giving them the necessities of life. Further, the Christian view that death is just a precursor to eternal life found much acceptance during a period of sudden, unexpected death. (29) The plague left Rome quaking, entering a long period of political instability, and facing increasing pressures from the Germanic peoples on its European borders. The Church enjoyed a period of relative peace as the Roman Empire began to collapse. (30)

A second round of plague hit Rome from 251 A.D. to 266 A.D., producing at its height, a 5000 per day mortality rate in Rome. (31) Emperor Decius, fearful of the growing numbers of Christians, required all citizens to sacrifice to the emperor on pain of death. However, the Roman citizens protected many Christians, blunting the effects of Decius’ decree. (32) Decius

was killed in battle with the Goths in 251 A.D., (33) ending the persecutions. His successor Valerian renewed the persecution in 257 A.D., but his attempt to crush the Church was cut short when he was captured by the Persians in 259 A.D. (34) After the second plague had run its course, the Church was stronger, and the empire was recruiting German barbarians to fill the depleted ranks of its army. (35)

The last and most vicious persecution came under Emperor Diocletian, who outlawed Christianity in 303 A.D. However, so widespread had Christianity become, that many local rulers did not enforce the decree. (36) Unfortunately, others pursued Christians with a vengeance, killing as many as 800,000 Christians in Egypt alone. (37) The Eastern Roman ruler, Maximum II, even tried to revive Babylonian Paganism into a new unified religion. But his attempts to revive Paganism, and his persecution of the Egyptians, were ended by his death in battle against a rival claimant to power in the Eastern Empire. (38) Babylon's greatest attack against Christianity had failed.

In the year 312 A.D., the city of Rome was captured by Constantine, an ambitious westerner, who eventually became Emperor of the western and eastern Roman Empires. (39) He was also a Christian, although he was not baptized until he was on his deathbed. (40) In the next year, Emperor Constantine granted religious freedom to the Christians, sending the exiles back home and ending the Roman persecutions. (41) The revolution had finally come to pass.

The kingdom of Heaven had triumphed over Babylonian Rome by claiming its subjects one heart at a time, until at last; the emperor himself bowed his knee to Christ.

The god-king of Babylon had renounced his divinity and surrendered to the real Seed of Woman. It was a unique moment in history.

The Church had survived every persecution Satan could throw at it. The question now became this:

“Could the Church survive success?”

Chapter 21

Counterrevolution: The Babylonian Church

Up until the time of Constantine, the great strength of the Church remained as it was from the beginning: the Kingdom of Heaven within the believers gave them the power to overcome the world. The pagan Roman Empire was defeated, not by force of arms, but by the spiritual weapons of the inner Kingdom of God. (1)

But even before Constantine legalized Christianity in 313 A.D., the spiritual life of the Church had been weakening. A decline in the spiritual gifts, such as healing and prophecy, which characterized the early Church, was noted by the Third Century Church patriarch Origen, who blamed the decline on loss of holiness and purity by the people. (2) Fear of heresy led to increased institutionalism in the Church, with the bishops assuming all power to teach and perform the sacraments of the Church. (3) A new priesthood was beginning to form.

The position of the priesthood was strengthened under Constantine, as church meetings were moved out of believer's homes into large buildings which Constantine bestowed on the Church. Services were now led by the clergy instead of the people. A further blow was struck as the priesthood moved toward Sacramentalism, emphasizing the outward form of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Spontaneous worship during church meetings was extinguished,

and the people became passive spectators as the priests performed their rituals. (4) The outward form was replacing the inner power in the institutional church, just as it had after Noah's descendants settled in Babylonia. And, as in Babylon, the separation of the people from their inner relationship with God opened the door to the Babylonian System.

The event that brought about the beginning of the Babylonian revival was, paradoxically, the outlawing of pagan religions by Emperor Theodosius in 380 A.D. (5) Suddenly masses of unconverted pagans began to flood into the Church, even as the Church itself was struggling under the deadening influence of Sacramentalism. The effect on the life of the Church was catastrophic, as outward sacramental rituals came to replace the inner power of believers. Certainly, the inner power remained in the believing remnant, and these believers launched movements such as the Monastic movement, which kept the Spirit alive in the Church. (6) But the institutional church was no longer a place of spiritual power. Instead, it began to attract the ambitious and worldly, who saw the Church as a path to power and wealth. (7)

The first to appreciate the worldly power inherent in the new state religion were the emperors themselves. Constantine, the first champion of the Church, considered himself "equal to the apostles" and presided over Church councils even though he was not officially a Christian. (8) Tellingly, he retained the old pagan Roman priestly title of "Pontifex Maximus." (9) In his new capital city of Constantinople he determined to build a Christian state, and his successors considered the Church and state to be one. (10) The later emperors assumed that their actions represented God's will, claiming, much as the old kings of Babylon did, to be God's representatives on Earth. (11)

Unlike the emperor-dominated Roman Empire, Church government was much more diffuse in the beginning, resting on the local bishops who were virtually autonomous. By the Fourth Century, the institutional trend of the Church had led to recognition of five bishops as leaders: Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome. (12) These five bishops, or patriarchs as they were called, became infected with the ambitions of the emperors, and a struggle for supremacy began. The battle was not fought with swords and armies, as the emperors did when challenged. Rather, the battle was fought through a series of doctrinal controversies and political maneuvers.

The first group to be driven from leadership was the Jewish Christians, who were required to abandon the Jewish feast celebration dates by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. As a result, many Jewish Christians left the organized church and the foundation for later shameful anti-Semitic acts was laid. (13) By the time Theodosius made Christianity the state religion, the Bishop of Jerusalem was not numbered among the patriarchs. (14)

The next patriarch to be dealt with was the Patriarch of Antioch. At the council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., a bishop of Constantinople named Nestorius was condemned for opposing elevation of Mary as the "Mother of God." (15) The real losers, however, were the churches of Antioch, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, which refused to agree with the council of Ephesus. These churches became known as "Nestorian" churches and were excluded from the orthodox faith, even though their missionary activities reached all the way to China. Antioch fell under control of Constantinople, as had Jerusalem, leaving only the three patriarchs at Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome. (16)

Twenty years later, at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D., the Bishop of Alexandria and the Alexandrian Church were accused of heresy. The Emperor in Constantinople and the Bishop of Rome, Leo, joined forces to overthrow the Bishop of Alexandria, installing a bishop subservient to the Bishop of Constantinople. (17) The Egyptian Church refused to submit to the

alien Bishop, and eventually the Coptic Orthodox Church took shape outside of “orthodox” Christianity. (18) Such was the persecution of the Coptic Church by the Byzantine Church, that the Islamic Arab invasion of Egypt in 640 A.D. was welcomed by the Egyptian Church. (19)

By 451 A.D., the Roman Empire was staggering from successive waves of invasion by the Barbarian Germanic peoples of Europe. The Western Empire had virtually ceased to function, and Rome itself was sacked by Barbarians in 410, 455, and 476. (20) In fact, the Bishop of Rome in 451 A.D., Leo, was given credit for convincing Attila the Hun to spare Rome. Perhaps feeling vulnerable to the Bishop of Constantinople who lived safely under the Eastern Roman Emperor, Leo began a campaign to promote the Bishop of Rome as the primary patriarch of the Church. It was Leo who claimed Caesar’s old pagan Roman title of “Pontifex Maximus” and laid the foundation of the Papacy. (21)

In 476 A.D., the last Western Roman Emperor was defeated by a German warlord, who assumed the title “King” and brought the Western Roman Empire to an end. But most of the Barbarians who overran Rome had become Christians, and the Bishops of Rome found themselves in the curious position of being venerated by their conquerors. (22) It was only a matter of time until a military alliance with the Barbarians would be made, and in 496 A.D. the great Frankish warlord Clovis was baptized along with his followers at Reims, France. Clovis, now ruling under Church authority, was encouraged to battle the “enemies” of the Church. In what was the first war justified as a Christian crusade, Clovis defeated the heretical Arian Christian Visigoths in 507 A.D. (23) The crusade gained Clovis Southern France, but the Bishop of Rome had gained an army. This alliance between the Christian kings and the Bishop of Rome would form the foundation of Papal rule in Europe for a millennium.

The Roman Pope’s acquisition of armed forces led to a stalemate in his battle for Church supremacy with the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Eastern Roman Emperor. Both Pope and Emperor claimed the pagan priestly title of “Pontifex Maximus.” Both the Pope and Emperor claimed to be God’s representative on Earth, as did the old kings of Babylon. Both Pope and Emperor claimed to be the embodiment of the “Christian” state, with Christians within and heathens outside, as opposed to Christ’s plan for an inner Kingdom of God which is available to all men, whether under rule of Christians or not. In reality, both Pope and Emperor had recreated the old Roman Empire, and both brought Babylonian kingship back to life.

As the Babylonian priesthood and kingship systems began to arise in the Church, other Babylonian institutions soon followed. At the council of Nicea in 325 A.D. the Church was forbidden to follow the Jewish festival calendar. (24) These festivals, which present a picture of the Coming of Christ, the Church Age, and the Second Coming of Christ, were established by God under the Old Covenant as a symbol of the New Covenant. This God-directed calendar was rejected at Nicea, and in its place an ever increasing set of pagan holidays were adopted in an effort to placate the pagans forced into the Church.

Our Christmas holiday, honoring the birth of Jesus, was established as December 25, in spite of the fact that careful study of the account of Christ’s birth indicates that He could only have been born near the spring or fall equinox. (26) The December 25 date was the winter solstice date of ancient Rome, before calendar corrections and the precession of the equinoxes moved it to the current date of December 22. The winter solstice was chosen because it was the birthday of the Roman sun god, and the time of the popular pagan Roman Saturnalia Festival. The winter solstice was also the birthdate of both the Egyptian son of Isis and the Babylonian son of the Queen of Heaven, both of which were prototype False “Seed of Woman” gods. Even the Christmas fir tree had its origins in the pagan Roman Saturnalia Festival. (27)

The very name of the Passover Festival, and Christian celebration of Christ's resurrection, was changed to "Easter," an Anglo Saxon name of the Babylonian mother goddess Ishtar. The eggs which symbolize the holiday today can be found in pagan communities of the Druids, Greeks, Hindus, Chinese, Egyptians, and Babylonians. The feast day celebrating Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary was set at March 25, the feast day of the Syrian mother goddess Cybele. (28) The feast which celebrates the "Assumption" of Mary to her heavenly throne was established on August 15, the Feast Day of Diana of the Ephesians. (29)

It was at Ephesus, home of Diana's Great Temple, that veneration of the Virgin Mary as the "Mother of God" was allowed by the Church council in 431 A.D. (30) Up until the Fourth Century, there was no recorded veneration of Mary in the Church, (31) but after the pagans flooded in as forced "converts," the cult of Mary blossomed in the Churches. (32) As they entered the Church, for instance, the worshippers of Isis, the popular Egyptian goddess, simply replaced Isis with Mary. Even the familiar "Madonna and Child" image derives from pagan pictures of Isis with infant Horus. (33)

Attributes of the pagan mother goddesses, such as the perpetual virginity of Ishtar, Inana, Diana, and Athena, were attributed to the Virgin Mary (34) even though the Gospels make it clear that she had other children (Matt. 12:46). And, of course, Mary was given the title "Queen of Heaven" just like the original Babylonian prototype Inana. While church scholars claimed that Mary was simply a highly honored human being, there is no doubt that many common people worshipped her as a goddess after the council of Ephesus exalted her position. (35) The Babylonian mother goddess had returned in Christian disguise.

In fact, by the Sixth Century, the Babylonian System had been resurrected under a Christian veneer. The six elements of the Old Babylonian System were, however, easily recognizable:

1. Separation of God and Man by a priestly intermediary

The love and devotion of most church priests is undeniable, but the separation of God and Man by a priestly intermediary had nevertheless been accomplished by the institutionalization of the Church, which allowed only priests to perform spiritual functions. The practice of Sacramentalism, by focusing believers on outward rituals, robbed many of a relationship with God and the inner power to live a victorious Christian life.

2. The god-king as a false "Seed of Woman"

While the Church recognized Christ as the only Messiah, the place of the Babylonian god-king or god-priest was taken by the Emperor in the Eastern Roman Empire and the Pope in the Western Roman Empire. Both claimed to be God's representative, like the Old Babylonian Kings, but both usually pursued the outward manifestations of worldly power rather than the inner Kingdom of God.

3. Worship of the mother of the "Seed of Woman"

Veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus, led many to treat her as a mother goddess figure, in the same manner as the Babylonian mother goddesses such as Diana, Isis, and Ishtar. For many, Mary became the main intermediary between God and man, usurping the role of Christ.

4. Displacement of God the Father

The institutionalization of the Church caused heartfelt worship of God the Father to be displaced by institutional religious ceremonies which turned believers into spectators. Adoration was usually reserved for Mary, the Mother Goddess.

5. Sympathetic Magic

Sympathetic Magic to bring Heaven to Earth crept into the church through the rituals of Sacramentalism, claiming to redeem by outward manifestations such as baptism and the Lord's Supper. Magical powers were also ascribed to relics, icons, and statues as the people, seeking spiritual powers, sank deeply into superstition.

6. Worship of the Stars

The Church condemned worship of the stars, but astrology continued to be practiced within the Church under the guise of ancient science. Knowledge of the Babylonian gods and mythology survived because of the Church's toleration of astrology, leading to the later occultic movements. (36)

Of course, the Babylonian Church System, which attached itself to the Church, lacked the power of the old Babylonian System because there were so many true Christians in the Church like Nestorius, who opposed the elevation of Mary at Ephesus. (37) Even some of the Eastern Emperors tried unsuccessfully to reform the Church by removing the idolatrous icons from the church. (38) Thus it can be said that there were many, if not most, in the priesthood and leadership who remained true to the faith, even under the force of the Babylonian Church.

The situation in the church actually parallels the historical experience of Israel, which had godly kings and priests at some times and pagan kings and priests at others. But, as with Israel, even with the Church under pagan leadership, God always had His remnant. And, as Israel remained as God's people, even under Babylonian domination, so the Church—whether Messianic, Coptic, Nestorian, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, or Charismatic—remains to this day, as the Body of Christ.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the Babylonian Church was a disaster for the true Church, as once again the Christians became a target for persecution. However, as one commentator so aptly put it, the Church was organized for disaster. (39) Even as the institutional church was losing its spiritual power, God raised up the Monastic movement and others which kept the true faith alive. (40) But the real heroes, as always, were the ordinary believers—both priests and laymen—who somehow found their way to God despite the barriers placed in their path by the Babylonian Church. And we know that many did, for it was also in this early age of the Babylonian Church that Christians evangelized Europe and took the Gospel to the ends of the Earth. (41)

Yet, at the end of the Sixth Century, Babylon had regained political control of the old Roman Empire and still held its power in the civilizations of Persia, India, China, and the Americas, as well as its stronghold among the Barbarian and Shamanistic peoples of the Earth. Babylon seemed to be invincible.

Little did the leading Babylonian kings of Persia and Byzantium realize that, when they began another of their border wars, they were opening the door to their doom, and the first new false religion since Nimrod.

PART SIX: BABYLON AND THE RELIGION OF NO MESSIAH

“When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.”

Revelation 6:3,4

Chapter 22

Mohammed and the Messiah

At the beginning of the Seventh Century, the world had been in the grip of the Babylonian religion for nearly three thousand years. The Christian faith, released by the coming of the Seed of Woman, remained a vital force, but the Babylonian Church had regained control of political power in the Christianized lands. Outside of the Christian world, the god-kings, god-priests, and shamans of the Babylonian System continued to dominate their fellow men as they had from the beginning.

Deep in the heart of Arabia stood a pagan temple dedicated to Hubal, a False Seed of Woman, and god of the local chiefs, along with mother goddesses Allat, Uzza, and Manut, imported from Syria. In the middle of the temple was a black stone, probably a meteorite, which was worshipped (1) much as the ancient Egyptian Ben-Ben Stone had been. The temple, known as the Kaba, was the sacred precinct of the Quraysh Tribe, rulers of the city of Mecca. It was a member of this tribe who turned the pagan world upside down. His name was Mohammed. (2)

The Arabs had always honored “Allah,” a name which means “The God.” (3) The name is very ancient, being related to the Hebrew name for God, “El,” and probably also the Sumerian god Enlil. Somehow, Mohammad saw through the Babylonian deception and began to seek after the real God. We know that he was influenced by Arabian Jewish communities, (4) but the only Christian witness he received was from the Babylonian Church which convinced him that Christians worshipped God, Jesus, and the Virgin Mary. (5) Not surprisingly, he concluded that the Christian and Jewish revelations were contaminated. He believed that his mission was to bring God’s final word to mankind, correcting the beliefs of Christians and Jews. (4)

The belief system he developed incorporated the history of Abraham, focusing on his rejection of polytheism and faith in the One true God. (7) Believers were expected to perform outward rituals, such as daily prayer, as signs of their devotion to God. (8) Mohammed also established moral laws for his followers, and taught them that there would be a final resurrection and judgment. (9) He wrote his teachings in the Quran, meaning “Recitation,” (10) which Moslems hold to be the unchangeable word of God. (11)

Jesus is mentioned 97 times in the Quran, and He is given praise second only to Mohammed, but is considered to be merely a prophet of God. (12) The Quran teaches that He was born of the Virgin Mary, but also teaches that Jesus did not die on the cross. (13) Jesus’ claim to be the Son of God, the promised “Seed of Woman,” was denied. In fact, the very concept of the “Seed of Woman” was denied because Islam teaches that God cannot share His nature with humanity. (14)

Mohammed's denial of the "Seed of Woman" promise constituted a break with both Babylonian religious traditions and Judeo-Christian beliefs. None of the prior reformers of Babylonian Systems, including Buddha, Confucius, or Zoroaster, had denied the very root of their religion which was the False "Seed of Woman" belief. (15) Babylon denied that Christ was the Messiah because Babylon worshipped a false Messiah in His place, while Islam denied Christ by simply claiming that there was no Messiah. Islam, as the first world religion to eliminate the "Seed of Woman," became the Religion of No Messiah and was therefore opposed to both Christianity and the Babylonian System.

Mohammed's anti-pagan teaching was not well received by the followers of Hubal in Mecca, and Mohammad was forced to flee in 622 A.D. (16) He and his followers settled in Medina, and from there waged a war against the caravan trade of Mecca, even attacking his own kinsmen. At Medina, he developed the concept that the Moslem community, the "Dar El-Islam," or "House of Submission," would wage a war to control those outside of Islam, the "Dar El-Har," or "House of War." (17) This concept, later incorporated into the "Jihad," or Holy War, kept the Arab community unified against their common enemies. (18) Further, Mohammed's encouragement of material gain through plunder, along with the belief that all was done with the blessing and reward of God, produced some of the most dedicated warriors the world has ever seen. (19)

After seven years of warfare, Mohammed had formed alliances with tribal leaders throughout Arabia. (20) Wisely, he did not require conversion to his new religion, just submission to his rule. (21) Finally, even the rulers of Mecca made their peace, bowing to the power of Mohammed, but extracting concessions which later allowed the ruling families of Mecca to control the Islamic community. (22) In addition, the rulers of Mecca caused Mohammed to add a requirement to the Quran that pilgrims journey to their Kaba temple in Mecca, which was cleansed of all pagan trappings except for the curious retention of homage to the Black Stone. (23)

While Mohammed was working to build a unified Arab nation, Byzantium and Persia, the two great empires on his borders, were in the final stages of a mutually destructive war. The Persians had captured Antioch, Damascus, and Jerusalem, butchering the people and ravaging the countryside. (24) As many as 800,000 Egyptians died in the Persian onslaught. (25) Then, the tide of war turned and the Byzantines ravaged Persian territory, capturing the Persian capital in 627. Both sides were bled white in the conflict, and totally unprepared for the Arab onslaught to come. (26)

Mohammed died in 632 A.D., having unified the fractious Arabs and given them the powerful ideal of his new religion. After a brief time of civil war, his "successor," the "Khalifa," or "Caliph," began to test the borders of Persia and Byzantium. (27) The area of Syria and Northern Mesopotamia was particularly vulnerable because Arabs had become the dominant population in those areas. (28) In addition, many of the people looked upon the Arabs as liberators from the oppressive governments of Byzantium and Persia. (29) Even Christians who had been oppressed by the Babylonian Church, those in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, found the Arabs to be more lenient rulers. (30)

In 634, under the second Caliph Umar, the Arabs struck. (31) Using camels to outmaneuver their enemies through the desert fringes of the fertile crescent, the Arabs began a lightning campaign through the weakened Byzantine and Persian Empires, taking Syria in 636, crushing the Persians in 637, and conquering Egypt by 642. (32) The city of Jerusalem, now considered a holy city by Moslems as well as by Christians and Jews, fell in 637. (33) By the time of his

death in 644, Umar ruled an empire that extended from Tripolitania in the west to the Iranian plateau in the east. (34)

Umar was assassinated in 644, as was his successor Uthman in 656. A struggle for power ensued between those who favored a member of Mohammed's family as Caliph and the leading families of Mecca, known as the Umayyads. (35) The Umayyads, leveraging the concessions made by Mohammed, came to power and the Caliph from Mohammed's family line, Ali, was assassinated in 661. However, the struggle did not end there as those favoring Ali, who were mostly Eastern Moslems, formed the Shiite sect of Islam. The Umayyad supporters, living mostly in the western areas, became known as Sunni Moslems. The division between Shiite and Sunni remains to this day in the Islamic world. (36)

Moslem conquests continued under the Umayyads, covering North Africa in 705, Spain in 711, and as far as the Chinese outposts on the Silk Road by 751. (37) The Umayyads moved their capital to the better located city of Damascus in 661 A.D., and the successor Arab dynasty, the Abassids, moved to the more centrally located region of Iraq in 750 A.D. Here the powerful King Al Mansur built his capital city of Baghdad between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers not far from the ruins of Babylon. (38)

In the conquered lands, the Arabs wisely continued the policy of tolerating beliefs of the subject populations. (39) However, conversion to Islam brought tax relief and access to power, (40) so that those who had joined the Church for economic or social reasons now became Moslems. Thus, the areas under Arab rule were pacified through benevolent government, and the majority of the population gradually converted to Islam. (41)

Only after the majority had become Moslem did the Christians begin to experience intermittent periods of persecution. The Coptic Church, victims of murderous cruelty under the Romans, Byzantines, and Persians, continued to offer countless martyrs under the Moslems, (42) as the Prophet Isaiah had foreseen: "In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt" (Is. 19:19) The survival of the native Christian churches under Moslem rule is an everlasting testimony to the power of the Gospel and the faith of the people.

In the holy city of Jerusalem, the Moslems moved to assert their dominance by appropriating the site of the Jewish temple which had been destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. Here they built their own holy site, the Dome of the Rock, in 690 A.D. Inside the structure, written on the walls, was an admonition not to believe that Jesus was the Son of God. (43)

In just a few short years the Religion of No Messiah had captured the Holy City of the Christians and Jews, and conquered the ancient homeland of the Babylonian religion. The Religion of No Messiah had become a third major spiritual force in the world, opposed to both the true Christian Messiah and the False Messiah of the Babylonian religion.

The Christian response to Islam was the same as the Christian response to Babylon: Build the Kingdom of God within the believers, and win the world one heart at a time. Then, as now, Christians should honor and respect the Moslems, while showing love and sharing the story of Jesus. (44)

The response of the Babylonian Church was exactly opposite, slandering the name of Christ and creating a stumbling block which would never be forgotten.

Ever focused on the outward form of religion, the Babylonian Church determined to recapture the ancient Holy City, Jerusalem.

They called it a Crusade.

Chapter 23

CRUSADES AND CATHEDRALS

The initial Arab thrust had carried Islam to Spain in the west, while in the east the Byzantine Empire had managed to retain Asia Minor. These border areas were constant sources of warfare, but by the end of the Eighth Century the Arab expansion had spent its energy. (1) By the Tenth Century, Arab unity had been lost, and the Abassaid Caliphs in Baghdad began to lose power to the local rulers. (2)

The internal divisions of the Arab world presented a serious problem to the Islamic Abassoids, who were forbidden to fight their fellow Muslims by the Quran. The solution to the dilemma came when the Caliphs began recruiting “slave armies” from the non-Muslim people beyond their borders. The largest group forming the slave army was from an Altaic people of the Russian steppes, the Turks. With their Turkish armies, the Caliphs were free to make war on their brother Moslems. (3)

But the Abassoids learned the same lesson the Romans did about Barbarian armies. The Turks converted to Islam and began to nip away at the northern fringes of their empire. Then they moved south, taking Persia in 1040, Armenia in 1049, and Baghdad itself in 1055. (4) At Baghdad the Turks showed themselves to be shrewd politicians by keeping the Abassoids as figureheads and declaring themselves to be their protectors. They took the title “Sultan,” which means “Holder of Power.” Then they marched west to attack the Christians and take what remained of the Abassoids’ possessions.

In 1071 the Turks crushed the Byzantine army at Manzikert in eastern Anatolia, capturing Antioch, Edessa, and all of Eastern Anatolia as a result. The Byzantine Empire lost about half of its population to Turkish control, and never regained its former power. (6) This new revival of Islamic aggression, along with Turkish oppression of Christians in the Holy Land, produced a wave of fear and anger in both the Western and Eastern Churches. (7) The result was a Babylonian Church “Jihad” which we call the Crusades. (8)

The concept of a Holy War had been a part of the Babylonian Church since Clovis pledged his army to the Church and drove the Arian Visigoths out of France. (9) The doctrine of a “just war,” based on a just cause, right intention, and proper legal proclamation (i.e., by the Pope or Emperor) was developed to justify such actions. However, a new concept was added to the “just war” doctrine in the face of the Islamic threat of the Eleventh Century: the concept of “Christendom.” Under this viewpoint, Christianity was a political movement, ruling a Christian Kingdom through Christ’s representative, the Pope. (10) Any war that expanded “Christendom” was therefore defined to be a “just war.”

No longer were the Islamic peoples viewed as souls to be won to Christ by the inner Kingdom of God. Now anyone outside of Christendom was an enemy to be destroyed or forced to convert. This monstrous perversion, directly contrary to Christ’s teaching, has been used to slander His name among believers and non-believers to this day.

It was Pope Urban II who issued the call for the first Crusade in 1095. Beyond the emotional appeal to defend Christendom from the Turks, the Pope promised absolution of all sins and a martyr’s crown for those who died in action. Of course, the Crusaders were also promised spoils of war and lands in the rich provinces of the mysterious Near East. Thus, with

the promise of riches on Earth, honor in Death, and no punishment for sins committed along the way, the Pope recruited a vast army for his invasion of the Holy Land. (11)

Before they even left Europe, the Crusaders showed just what sort of army they were. The first group were driven back home after leaving a trail of robbery and plunder. Worst yet, in France, Germany, and Bohemia, the Crusaders attacked the helpless Jewish populations, causing the first European Holocaust. Jews, being outside of “Christendom,” were considered fair game for the Crusaders, who thought they were avenging a wrong done to Christ their King. This ugly anti-Semitism was a feature of all Crusades, (12) and, like the Crusades themselves, was carried out in direct contradiction of God’s commands. For no true Christian can deny that we are commanded to honor the Jews. (Ro. 11:25-32)

The main Crusader army reached Asia Minor by 1098, marching easily to capture the major cities of Edessa and Antioch. The fearsome Turks offered little effective resistance because they had become divided against themselves. The Arabs in Syria and the Holy Land were chafing from oppressive Turkish rule, and the Egyptian Arabs had been driven out of the Holy Land by the Turks. Unable to mount a unified front, the Islamic forces were also unable to stop the Crusader advance to Jerusalem. (13) They took the city in 1099, butchering the Moslems and burning the Jews alive in their synagogues. (14) “Christendom” had come to Jerusalem.

Back in Europe, the success of the Crusades in the Holy Land seemed to validate the whole Crusading paradigm. The conflict between the Christian kings in Spain and the Moorish Moslem rulers was immediately christened a Crusade, hastening the reconquest of Spain. In the ensuing years, wars with the pagans in the Baltics, and even wars with Italian political opponents of the Pope, were declared to be Crusades. (15) But these Crusades, however un-Christian they were, were at least fought against armed forces. In the Crusades launched against “heretics,” such as the Albigensian Crusade of Pope Innocent, III, entire communities of innocent people were murdered, whether Catholic or heretic. (16)

The repressive measures taken against “heretics” within Christendom had more to do with power than with doctrine. Both the Cathari and the Waldenses, who were viciously persecuted, objected to the monopoly power of the Church hierarchy over the believers’ lives. (17) The common people found this “heretical” idea attractive because the priests had become amoral and greedy. (18) Of course, to the Babylonian Church, the rejection of its power was treason which could not be tolerated. Common people were even forbidden to read the Scriptures in their native languages, lest they judge for themselves the groundless claims of the Babylonian Church. (19)

To strengthen their appeal to the common people, the Babylonian Church leaders resorted to one of the most ancient and popular figures of the Babylonian Religion: the mother goddess, now worshipped by many as the Virgin Mary. Leading the revival of Mary worship was Bernard of Clairvaux, who founded the Cistercian Order and helped organize the militant order of the Knights Templar, dedicating both to the Virgin Mary. To Bernard, Mary was not only the “Mother of God” but was also the Bride of Christ and the Queen of Heaven. (20) Not surprisingly, the worship of the Virgin Mary reached its apogee in Bernard’s time. (21)

Bernard was also instrumental in the construction of the Gothic cathedrals dedicated to the Virgin Mary—the Notre Dame (“Our Lady”) Cathedrals of France. (22) The greatest of these cathedrals at Chartes was the center of the Mary Cult. Like the ziggurats of Babylon, the Cathedral was considered to be the throne of the Queen of Heaven. (23) Other Babylonian trappings of the Chartes Cathedral included a “Black Virgin” statue worshipped since Druid times, (24) a labyrinth and a window dedicated to the zodiac. (25) The Cathedral, along with the

other Notre Dame Cathedrals of Reims, Aimens, Bayeux, Paris, and Rouen, also forms an earthly map of the constellation Virgo, the heavenly representation of the Queen of Heaven. This complex of Cathedrals is the largest sympathetic magic structure on Earth, a map of the heavens spread throughout northern France, bringing Notre Dame, the Queen of Heaven, down to Earth. (26)

The Notre Dame Cathedrals were, in fact, part of a propaganda effort, with each ceremony of enthroning Mary promoting the claims of the Babylonian Church. Even the Nativity scenes which were popularized during the era were designed to promote the worship of Mary in the Babylonian Church. (27) But even with the public relations machine of the Cathedrals and nativity scenes, and the terror of the Crusading armies, the “heretics” continued to trouble the Babylonian Church. Finally, the Babylonian Church instituted a program to arrest, torture, and kill the heretics which gained lasting infamy as “the Inquisition.” (28) Only then were the “heretics” driven deep underground, finally reemerging in the Protestant Reformation. (29)

Unlike the helpless “heretics” who were victims of the European Crusaders, the Moslems in the Middle East finally regained some unity and declared a Jihad, beginning a counter-offensive against the Crusaders. The first Crusader State, Edessa, fell in 1144, and the Crusaders were put on the defensive thereafter. Then, in 1174, a strong Moslem leader named Saladin united Egypt and Damascus against the Crusaders. Now it was a united Moslem front against a divided Christian camp, and in 1187 Saladin took advantage of weak Crusader leadership, crushing the Crusader Army at the Horns of Hattin in Galilee. After this catastrophe, the Crusaders lost Jerusalem, and their kingdoms were confined to the coastal strip of the Levant.

The loss of Jerusalem galvanized another Crusading movement across Europe, called by Pope Innocent III, the Pope who crushed the Albigensian “heretics” and invented the Inquisition. (31) This Crusade, however, never made it to the Holy Land. Instead, the Crusaders attacked the home of the Eastern Church, Constantinople, in 1204. Thus, the Pope had finally, if only temporarily, achieved dominance over the Eastern Roman Emperor and his church. But the real consequence of the Crusade was the further weakening of the only barrier between the Moslems and Europe, the Byzantine Kingdom. (32)

But now the Moslems were focused on the Crusaders, determined to win back the territory they had lost. They drove them back in Asia Minor and kept them confined to their coastal strip in the Levant.

However, it turned out that the Moslems were focused against the wrong enemy.

Chapter 24

PAGANS AND PLAGUES

In 1211, Genghis Khan emerged from his tent in Mongolia to proclaim “Heaven has promised me victory.” So began the largest empire in the history of the world. (1)

Genghis Khan, as the leader of his tribe, was believed to have heard from his father, the sky god Tengri, when he received his promise of victory. As with the Chinese sky god Shang-Ti, Tengri ruled from the polar regions of the sky. Like the god-kings of China, Genghis Khan was known as the Son of Heaven and was said to have been born of a virgin. (2) Armed with his vision from Heaven, the god-king of the Mongolians set out on his path of conquest. (3)

For over twenty years, Genghis Khan had laid the foundations of his power. First he united his own people, the Mongolians, under his rule. Then he brought his Altaic cousins, the Turks and Tartars of the Eurasian Steppes, into his camp. The vast majority of his armies were, in fact, Turks and Tartars who had united with him. These peoples of the Steppes were excellent horsemen and fearless warriors, forming a large and very mobile army which was more than a match for its opponents. (4)

The creed of his armies has been described as “pitiless paganism.” The Mongolians fought for a god-king who promised them the spoils of war and the sadistic thrills of combat. They were the most ruthless terrorists in history, butchering whole cities to discourage resistance. Thus, even though they numbered only a few hundred thousand, they gained such a reputation for invincibility that most surrendered to them rather than face annihilation. (5)

Genghis Khan began by attacking his neighbors, the Chinese, being motivated initially by a desire for revenge. Then he turned westward, moving across the Silk Road into Persia, Armenia, and Southern Russia. After his death in 1227, his sons and grandsons pushed outward from this core area of Genghis Khan’s conquests. To the east, Korea and Tibet were conquered. To the west, Mongol armies drove deep into Eastern Europe, nearly reaching Vienna. (6)

One of Genghis Khan’s grandsons, Hulegu, fell on the Moslems in 1256. He conquered Persia in 1257 and in 1258 the Abbasid capital of Baghdad was captured and most of its inhabitants were slaughtered. (7) The last Abbasid Caliph was killed in Baghdad, and the Mongolians moved quickly into Mesopotamia and Syria. The Moslem world had suffered a crippling blow, as Turk and Arab alike submitted to the Mongolian terror (8), and Nimrod’s ancient kingdom was back in the hands of a Babylonian god-king.

The Crusader kingdoms, clinging tenaciously to life on the Mediterranean coastline, at first saw the Mongolians as allies against the Moslems. Some Crusaders even joined the Mongolian army for a time. But even the Babylonian Church could not stomach the ruthlessness of the Mongolians, and the Crusaders eventually allied themselves with the Turkish rulers of Egypt against the Mongolians. In 1260, at the Battle of Ain Jalut (the Spring of Goliath), north of Jerusalem, the Egyptians routed the Mongolian army and saved Islam in the Middle East. (9)

For the Crusaders, the Egyptian victory gained nothing, for they were left facing a unified Moslem foe while they themselves were deeply divided. The Mongolian devastation of Baghdad had destroyed the trade routes which had moved through the Crusader ports, while new routes developed much further north, terminating on the Black Sea. The Crusader cities fell into poverty as trade disappeared, leaving them without financial resources for defense. By 1291, the last Crusader city in the Levant, Acre, had been reclaimed by the Moslems. (10)

The new northern trade routes across the Steppes brought a greatly increased contact between East and West. But they also brought increased contact between disease-bearing rodents of China and the Steppes. (11) For in the isolated Chinese province of Yunnan lay a reservoir of rodents infected with one of the deadliest diseases ever known, the Bubonic Plague. The Mongolians, through conquest and trade, loosed the Plague on the world. (12)

It began in 1331, when ninety percent of the population of Hopei in China died. By 1338, the Plague had traveled along the trade route and was devastating cities in Central Asia. In 1346, the Plague struck a Mongolian army attacking a European trade outpost in the Crimea. The army, decimated by disease, withdrew, but the Plague-carrying rodents remained. (13) Some of them found their way onto ships sailing for Europe and from 1346 to 1350, one third of the population of Europe and the Middle East died. (14) Subsequent outbreaks reduced populations in some countries by more than half. (15)

For such a terrible plague to fall on mankind there must have been an equally terrible judgment from God in Heaven. Babylon was trying to revive itself, both through the pagan god-king of Mongolia and the Crusading Babylonian Church, with its Cathedrals dedicated to the Queen of Heaven. As He had done to the Israelites who broke faith by worshipping Baal, the Lord sent a plague. (Nu. 25:1-9) And, as with the plague of Baal, the target of the Great Plague was Babylon.

The judgment fell hardest on the pagan Mongolians who had terrorized Asia and Eastern Europe. In China, where the Mongolians had established themselves as Emperors, a new dynasty arose in 1368, overthrowing Mongolian rule. The new dynasty revived the Babylonian traditions of its predecessors, but the country lost half its population and became increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. (16) Thus, in China, the aggressive Babylonian kingship of the Mongolians was replaced by a weak Babylonian kingship with limited influence outside its borders.

On the Steppes, the Mongolians began to lose control of their subject peoples as their numbers declined. In 1380, the Russians defeated them and began the process of liberating themselves from Mongolian rule. (17) The cities of Central Asia fell into decay because of the loss of population to the Plague, the interruption of the Asian trade routes by the Plague, and warfare against the Mongolians. Eventually the grasslands of the Steppe, which had produced the Shangs, the Aryans, the Scythians, the Huns, the Turks, the Mongolians, and other invaders of the civilized world for 3000 years, became virtually devoid of population. (18) Never again would horsemen from the Steppes carry the Babylonian System against the Christian or Moslem peoples.

The Mongolian survivors south of the Steppes must have felt abandoned by their pagan god Tengri, because most converted to Islam. The last great Mongolian warrior, Tamarlane, was actually a Moslem who spread terror during the Plague era. (19) Islamicized Mongolians known as "Moguls" conquered India, establishing Moslem rule over the Hindus. (20) While the majority of the Indians retained their Babylonian Hindu or Buddhist beliefs, the power of the Babylonian System in India was limited by the Moguls. Thus, as with China, Indian Babylonians turned inward and had little influence beyond their borders.

One of the Turkish tribes which had moved with the Mongolian conquest had settled in central Anatolia and, like the rest of the Turks and Mongols in the Middle East, adopted Islam. (21) This tribe, the Ottomans, rapidly became a powerful force in the Plague depleted areas around Anatolia. By 1350, they controlled most of Anatolia, and by 1400 they had moved into Europe and conquered Bulgaria. Ultimately they reached the gates of Vienna, and the legacy of brutal warfare between Moslems and Christians in Southeastern Europe remains to this day. (22)

It was the Turks who brought judgment to the Eastern Babylonian Church which was ruled from Byzantium, the Second Rome built by Constantine. Under the Byzantines, at the council of Ephesus, the Church was opened to paganism by exalting the Virgin Mary. (23) But, the council ignored this word of warning given by the Lord to Ephesus:

“Yet I held this against you: you have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand.”

Rev. 2:4,5

The “lampstand,” the Church, at Ephesus has in fact been removed. Nothing remains of the city today but ruins, (24) an eloquent testimony to the prophetic accuracy of the Scriptures.

The warning to Ephesus also went unheeded in Byzantium, capital of the shrinking Eastern Roman Empire. By 1453 the Second Rome was all that remained of the empire, and the Turks had begun their siege of the city. One hundred thousand Turks, armed with cannon, surrounded the once great city which could only muster seven thousand defenders. (25) Still hoping to avoid disaster, the citizens of the Second Rome appealed to the city’s divine protector—not God—but the Virgin Mary. (26) Her “sacred” icon was marched through the streets, along with relics and other icons, in the attempt to receive divine favor. But the city’s appeal to the Queen of Heaven went unanswered, and the icon of the Virgin Mary was destroyed when the Turks overwhelmed the Second Rome. (27)

The Turks wasted no time converting the city into a Moslem showplace. The great churches became mosques, and the name of the city was changed to Istanbul. As the Eastern Roman Emperor had done, the Sultan selected the new patriarch of the Orthodox Church, and wisely followed Mohammed’s commandment to allow Christians freedom to worship. (28) A niece of the last Eastern Roman Emperor took the Roman Eagles to Moscow when she married Ivan III, (29) establishing his claim to be Caesar, or “Czar,” of the Third Rome at Moscow. (30) He also took control of the Russian Church, further dividing the Orthodox. (31) Thus, the Babylonian Church lost the Second Rome to the Moslems, and removed its candlestick, however dimly lit, to the Third Rome in the depths of Russia.

The Plague also marked the beginning of the end for the Babylonian Church in the First Rome. The sympathetic magic represented by the Cathedrals, the relics, the statues, and the rituals proved useless in the face of the Black Death. The failure of Sacramentalism, the outward form of religion, led people to seek God for themselves. Ultimately this search led to the rediscovery of the Scriptures, and the renewal of demands to purify the Church (32) and return to the Lord’s plan to establish the inward Kingdom of God.

In the age of the Crusades, the Pope could call his armies to crush such “heresy.” After the Black Death had run its course, he found his kingdom divided into nation-states and the “heretics” began to build their own armies. (33) The Pope of the First Rome was about to join the Emperor of the Second Rome in defeat.

For there were seven heads on the Beast that John saw in his vision of Babylon, each representing a kingdom. (Rev. 17:9,10) The sixth kingdom was Imperial Rome, under whose power John was placed on his prison island of Patmos. (Rev. 17:10) The five kingdoms before Rome had already passed away by John’s day (Rev. 17:10) and these can be understood to form an unbroken chain back through Greece, Persia, Assyria-Babylon, and Egypt to Nimrod’s Babylon. The seventh kingdom which had not yet arisen in John’s day (Rev. 17:10) can most probably be understood to represent the Babylonian Church, under the dual leadership of the Pope in the First Rome and the Eastern Roman Emperor in the Second Rome.

After the fall of the seventh kingdom, John saw that the nations would be divided and that ten kingdoms would arise to rule the Earth (Rev. 17:12).

It was the Plague which toppled the King of the Second Rome and divided the kingdom of the Pope of the First Rome.

The Age of the Ten Kings had arrived.

PART SEVEN: THE COMING OF THE TEN KINGS

“The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast.”

Rev. 17:12

Chapter 25

Christendom Divided

The high water mark of Roman Christendom came in the year 1300, when Pope Boniface VIII declared a year of Jubilee and pilgrimage to Rome. (1) Watching his priests rake in the pilgrim offerings, Boniface declared himself to be both Pope and Caesar in Rome. In line with his claim of total authority, he also issued a Papal declaration stating that submission to Papal authority was necessary for salvation. (2)

But the Pope had made some powerful enemies, chief among them being the King of France, Phillip the Fair. (3) The two had already clashed over Phillip’s attempt to tax Church property, which amounted to about thirty percent of the land in Europe. (4) Now Phillip, having forced the Pope to compromise on Church taxation, challenged Boniface’s claim of authority over him by calling a French Council to declare that Phillip ruled by direct authority from God, not the Pope. (5) Phillip had, in effect, nullified the agreement of French Kings since Clovis to recognize Papal superiority in exchange for Papal legitimacy of their right to rule.

Pope Boniface prepared to respond to Phillip’s challenge to his authority by issuing a Papal interdict against the Kingdom of France. But he never got the chance, because in 1303 Phillip accused the Pope of heresy and sent a small force to arrest him at his home in Anagni. (6) The Pope was freed within a few days, but he never recovered from the indignity. Within three weeks the Caesar of the Roman Church was dead. (7)

Having destroyed his enemy, Phillip determined to bring the Papal office under his control. The new Pope, Benedict IX, died the next year under mysterious circumstances after resisting Phillip. After his death, the Italian Cardinals put forth a nominee who was known to dislike Phillip. But Phillip knew that the candidate would make any compromise to enjoy the benefits of the Papal office. The two struck a bargain, and Phillip threw his support to Clement V, who became Pope in 1305. (8) Clement, keeping his part of the bargain, appointed such a large number of French Cardinals that the next Pope was guaranteed to be French. (9) In addition, he moved the Papal court to Avignon, beginning a seventy two year period of Papal absence from Rome known ironically as the “Babylonian Captivity” of the Papacy. (10)

Phillip next turned upon one of the wealthiest and most powerful institutions under the Pope’s authority, the Knights Templar. Originally organized by Bernard in 1128 as part of the Crusades, the Templars were designed to be the Pope’s crusading army, and were outside of the control of both bishops and kings. (11) The order was strongly supported, amassing over 9000 manor properties and considerable wealth. (12) Because they built powerful forts to store their wealth, the Templars were asked to store the wealth of others, and transport wealth to remote locations like the Holy Land, becoming the first bankers of Europe. Eventually, the Templars even held the treasuries of nations, lending funds to kings and noblemen. They were the most powerful financial force of their age. (13)

But the Templars had lost public favor after the fall of the last Crusader Kingdom of Acre in 1291. (14) They had also made the fatal mistake of lending too much money to Phillip and his

barons.(15) Phillip, who had repaid his Jewish lenders by confiscating their wealth in 1306, (16) could not resist the temptation to cancel his debts, seize the Templar wealth, and destroy a powerful international force which could oppose his dominance of the Papacy. (17) On Friday, October 13, 1307, he gave orders to imprison the Templars throughout France on trumped up charges of heresy. (18)

Clement V was infuriated by Phillip's action, which was a blatant usurpation of his authority over the Templars. He also knew that the wealth of the Templars would never find its way back to the Church. (19) But, faced with the armies of Phillip and his threat of a heresy charge, Clement gave in and condemned the Templars in 1308. (20) Thus, the Pope was forced to condemn the last army he could call on. In just eight years, Phillip had taken control of the Papacy and rendered it powerless.

But the force of nationalism unleashed by Phillip was more powerful than he had bargained for. Hoping to take control of Christendom through the Papacy, he had set an example of defiance which was emulated by the other kings. Even Phillip's order to destroy the Templars, forced on Christendom through Clement's decree, was not followed by his fellow kings. Christian kings in Germany and Cyprus found the Templars not guilty, refusing to torture and imprison them. In Spain and Portugal the Templars were simply incorporated into new Christian orders, continuing the ongoing Crusade against the Moors. (21) The English king halfheartedly pursued the Templars, (22) and most escaped to Scotland where their military prowess turned the tide in the Scottish battle for independence. (23) The concept of "Christendom," the united Christian world under one God appointed leader, had been struck a mortal blow by the nations. (24)

Clement and Phillip both died in 1315, and the next Pope, John XXII, tried to reassert his authority over the kings by interfering in the selection of the German Emperor. The Germans, going one better than Phillip, declared that they had the right to appoint their own Emperor, and then tried to appoint a new Pope to replace John XXII. (25) In 1377 two rival Popes were elected, one at Avignon and one at Rome, and in 1410 there were three rival Popes. (26) Finally, the kings grew tired of Papal division and convened a council which elected Martin V in 1417. Interestingly, Martin repudiated the authority of the council as soon as he was selected, but by then the kings were too powerful to be set back by a Papal pronouncement. (27) The kings, not the Pope, would rule from now on.

It was during the "Babylonian Captivity" of the Papacy that the Bubonic Plague devastated Europe. Everyone, high or low, was affected by the Plague, and all recognized it as a judgment of God. (28) The Pope proved to be ineffective in the face of the Black Death, further weakening the Pope's claim to be God's mouthpiece on Earth. (29) Thoughtful churchmen began to question the institution of the Papacy even as the kings were dismantling the Empire of the Popes. (30)

One of the first to question the Papacy and survive was John Wycliffe, an English academician. Wycliffe was a strong believer in the authority of the Scriptures, and was responsible for the first English Bible translation. (31) His criticisms of Church wealth and clergy, along with his position that the nations were superior to Papal authority, made him popular with English nobility and scholars. The priests succeeded in having him removed from Oxford for his "heretical" writings, but the king and parliament kept him from being killed for his beliefs. (32) Those beliefs would later form the basis of the English reformation. (33)

That is not to say that religious freedom was allowed to blossom under the kings. John Huss, a follower of Wycliffe's in Prague, adopted Wycliffe's reformed theology and blended it

with Czech nationalism. The German Emperor tricked him into surrender, and Huss was burned at the stake in 1415. However, his death ignited a war which forced the Church and the Germans to allow a measure of freedom to the Czechs. (34)

The concept of freedom which began to appear at that time was born as much out of new military technology as out of the dreams of the people. For over a thousand years peasant armies had been dominated by heavily armored, mounted knights. But in the Thirteenth Century, the crossbow and longbow were improved to the point that their arrows could penetrate heavy armor. The invention of gunpowder in the Thirteenth Century ultimately made the peasant with a firearm lethal to mounted knights. Knighthood was finished, and military dominance was henceforth in the hands of peasants with rifles. The Swiss peasants gained such a reputation for fierceness during their struggle for freedom that they became the preferred source of mercenary soldiers in Europe for three hundred years. (35)

Unfortunately, the kings proved better able to capitalize on the gunpowder revolution than the peasants. The proud symbol of military dominance in the Middle Ages was the castle, which had allowed many nobles the security to defy their kings. But with the invention of cannons in the Fourteenth Century, castle walls could be breached in hours. Kings could now unify their kingdoms, bringing the nobles firmly under their command, as the French King did in the Fifteenth Century by driving out the English and conquering the barons. When fortifications were invented which were able also to withstand artillery bombardment, these were placed on the borders, as protection against other kings, rather than in the interior of a kingdom where a baron could form a center of resistance. (36)

Thus, gunpowder helped the kings eliminate threats inside their kingdoms and secure their borders against other kings. The nobility, weakened by loss of military superiority to peasant firearms and loss of defensive positions to cannon, remained as the ruling class but only in a subservient role to the kings. And Europe, once a nest of interlocking feudal relationships under the supreme Roman Pontiff, became divided more and more into nation states with defined borders and citizens who identified themselves by their nationality. (37)

Christendom, the Babylonian Church dominated world of Christian believers, still remained. It had only exchanged the unified rule of the Pope for the divided rule its kings.

Interestingly, Christendom divided under the Ten Kings became more powerful than the united Christendom had ever dreamed of being.

Chapter 26

The Last Crusades

Among the properties of the Knights Templar which escaped the grasp of King Phillip of France was a sizeable fleet of trading ships. No one knows today where the fleet went. (1)

But we have a clue from the kingdom of Portugal, where the Templar order was renamed the Knights of Christ and became a seafaring organization. Prince Henry the Navigator, architect of the Portuguese Navy, along with the great explorer Vasco de Gama, were members of the new Templar order. The father-in-law of Christopher Columbus was a grand master of the order and the sails of Columbus's ships bore the Templar Cross. Thus the Crusader mentality was inculcated in the sailing men of Portugal and Spain. (2)

The Gunpowder Revolution which swept Europe in the Fourteenth Century found a powerful outlet at sea. Cannon, which were difficult to move on land, could easily be fit into ships, making them portable bombardment platforms. When the Portuguese developed their famous long distance ocean-going ships, they possessed the ability to deliver overwhelming firepower against any coastal target in the world. Societies without matching firepower could no longer defend their coastal cities or trade. These ocean-going Crusades proved to be very profitable. (3)

Africa was the first target of the Portuguese. Moving past Morocco, which had cannons of its own, they sailed down the west coast of Africa to seize the trans-Saharan trade in gold and slaves. (4) In 1441 they captured their first slaves, building the first European African colony on an island fort in 1445 to facilitate slave trade with the local chiefs. The gold trade was begun in 1472, and a land settlement was made in Guinea in 1483. (5) By 1497 Vasco de Gama had sailed around the Horn of South Africa, and in the early Sixteenth Century Portuguese cannon destroyed the major Black Moslem East African cities, including Mombasa, Kilwa, and Bunda. (6) Their objective in East Africa was to capture the trade with India, and they moved on to establish outposts on the Straits of Hormuz and in India itself, as their cannon drove the Arab merchantmen from the seas. (7)

The Spanish, having driven the last Islamic Kingdom out of Spain in 1492, also began to look for lands to conquer. Christopher Columbus caught the Atlantic currents and landed on the islands of the Caribbean Sea in 1492, opening up a whole new world to the Spanish Crusaders. The "Indians" of the Islands had no firearms or cannon, and the steel swords of the Spaniards could cut through any Indian protective body wear, while Indian stone weapons were stopped by Spanish body armor. The island Indians were easily conquered, and the Spaniards began to look for gold and glory on the mainland of North America. (8)

In 1519, Hernando Cortez, spurred on by stories of immense wealth, landed in Mexico to conquer the natives. He found himself facing an empire of 25 million citizens, ruled by the fierce warriors of the Aztec Tribe, with only 600 men and a few horses and cannon. However, his firearms and steel weapons proved to be unstoppable militarily, and the few horses he brought were as frightening as they were effective. Beyond this technological superiority, however, was an amazing "coincidence" which paralyzed effective resistance to the Spaniards. (9)

The Aztecs were heirs to the Babylonian religious system of the Olmecs and Mayans. Among the myths of these people was the legend that the "feathered serpent," Quetzalcoatl, would return to reclaim his kingdom. Astonishingly, Quetzalcoatl was also described as a white, bearded man, appearing much as the Spaniards. In addition, the year of his return could only have been one year out of the 52 year calendar cycle used by the Aztecs, and the year the Spanish landed, 1519, was the year. (11) Thus, when the Aztec god-king, Montezuma, heard of the white bearded men whose firearms, horses, and steel weapons seemed god-like, he concluded that Cortez was Quetzalcoatl, returning to claim his kingdom. (12)

Montezuma was not sure he wanted to turn over his kingdom to Quetzalcoatl, especially since the white god seemed to have a habit of killing those who came to worship him. Even so, Montezuma let Cortez into his capital city of Tenochtitlan and allowed himself to be taken captive by the Spanish. Only then did the Aztecs realize that the Spaniards were not gods but were men. (13) Cortez was attacked by a huge force of Aztecs and driven out of the city with large losses. He was fortunate to reach the Mexican coast alive with the remnant of his army. (14)

But the Spaniards had another ally in their American crusade. The Indians had lived separated from the rest of humanity for over 2500 years since the collapse of the Bronze Age. They had missed out on the epidemic diseases that had swept the Eurasian continent, but they had also developed no immunities. In 1518, Smallpox swept through Hispanola, leaving only a thousand survivors out of a million who had lived there before Columbus landed. (15) By 1520 Smallpox had reached Mexico, killing perhaps half of the population. (16)

When the Indians saw that the Spaniards were immune to the plague, they were convinced that the gods favored the Spanish. (17) Cortez set out toward the Aztec capital again in 1520, with fresh troops and thousands of Indian allies. His ranks swelled with 100,000 Indians anxious to throw off Aztec dominance, and the force destroyed the Aztec capital and killed 250,000 Aztecs. The Spanish Mexican Crusade, sanctioned back home as a Crusade against the heathen Indians, had won an empire. (18)

Smallpox reached the Incas in South America well ahead of the Spaniards. By the time Pizarro and a few hundred men reached Peru in 1532 (19) the population had been cut in half (20) and the leadership divided in a civil war. Spanish military technology and the psychological factors of firepower, horses, and disease led to another conquest. (21) Both of the great American Empires had been destroyed in just 40 years after Columbus first sighted America. These were the last Crusades.

European diseases continued their deadly path through the Americas as waves of smallpox were followed by measles, typhus, and influenza. (22) Hernando De Soto, traveling through the southeast portion of what would become the United States, found whole villages abandoned to disease. The great cities of the mound builders in the Mississippi Valley were ghost towns when the French explorers first saw them. (23) It is estimated that the Native American population was reduced from 100 million to 5 million as the result of the European diseases. (24) Never had there been such a deadly plague.

As with the Bubonic Plague, the very magnitude of the disaster implies that a judgment from God is involved. And that judgment, like the Bubonic Plague, was aimed squarely at the Babylonian System. For by the time Cortez landed in Mexico, the Aztecs were sacrificing 50,000 humans a year to their bloodthirsty gods. (25) Human sacrifice, originating from the ancient Cretan colonists, was in fact endemic in the Americas. (26) This was the flash point of judgment, as it was with the societies of Canaan which God sent the Israelites to destroy when their sin reached its "full measure." (Ge. 15:16)

A further mystery remains, however, because the Spaniards who destroyed the Native American Kingdoms were not acting on God's command, as the Israelites were in Canaan. This is not to deny the fact that many sincere Christians loved the Indians and tried to save their lives as well as their souls. But the leaders were operating under the Babylonian Church, motivated by power and greed. Even so, the Lord uses even his enemies to accomplish his purpose, as illustrated by success of the Romans in destroying the human sacrificing Phoenicians and Druids. And, God had ordained that the Ten Kings would...

"hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked. They will eat her flesh and burn her with fire." Rev. 17:16

Thus, the Age of the Ten Kings marks a stepped up pressure from God to bring about the collapse of Babylonian Kingdoms, starting with the most extreme version, which existed in the Americas.

Of course, the Spanish Crusaders set about to transport the Babylonian Church to the Americas, and in this they succeeded. Faced with superior military technology and the failure of

their gods to protect them from European diseases, the Indians quickly converted to the God of the Spanish. (27) However, the Pagan elements in the Babylonian Church soon drew the Indians into their own mixture of Pagan and Christian elements. Mayan Shamans substituted Jesus and Mary into their pantheon as the sun and moon gods, (28) while in South America Mary was pictured as the Earth goddess Pachamama, and worshipped as the Virgin of Copacabana. (29) In Mexico, the Aztec mother goddess was worshipped through Mary, the Virgin of Guadalupe. (30) And the cross is still revered by the Maya, not as a symbol of Christ, but as a model of the Maya World Tree, the entry way to the Shamanistic spirit world. (31) Thus, while some found their way to Christ by adopting the inner Kingdom of God, which is available to God seekers even through the Babylonian Church, most traded one false religion for another.

Another heritage of the Spanish Crusade in the Americas was the slave trade. By the year 1535, not a single Native American remained alive on the Spanish Caribbean Islands, (32) and a new source for plantation labor had to be found. The Portuguese and their West African trading partners responded to this new demand by expanding the capture and sale of Africans as slaves. (33) Eventually, the African kings were trapped in a system where they had to either capture slaves or become slaves themselves. (34) And more than ten million human beings were ripped from their homes and brutally transported to the New World. (35)

The slave trade also brought the African diseases of Malaria and Yellow Fever to the New World, which were carried with African mosquitoes in pools of water on slave ships. These diseases completed the destruction of Native American populations in the Tropical lowlands, and rendered vast areas such as the Amazon Basin uninhabitable. However, the Europeans were as susceptible to these diseases as the Indians, and it was the Africans who had developed the immunities and survived. (36) Thus, the Europeans brought a disease judgment on themselves for their sin of enslaving the Africans. Even so, the sin of slavery remains as a barrier between Europeans and Africans in the New World to this day.

In the same year that Cortez set out to conquer Mexico, 1519, his King Charles V was elected Emperor of Germany. As King of Spain, and ruler of the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, and parts of Italy, he was already the greatest king in Europe. The conquests of Cortez and Pizarro made him the ruler of the largest empire on Earth, and also the richest King on Earth. (37)

In order to gain his election as Emperor of the Germans in 1519, Charles V had agreed to delay condemning a popular German “heretic” until he had a chance to prepare a defense. But with all of his power and wealth, Charles V was never able to condemn Martin Luther.

In 1557, Charles V retired to a monastery, broken by his failure to stop the Reformation. (38)

Chapter 27

The Reformation and Religious Liberty

For 1200 years after Constantine brought the Christian faith into a favored position in the Roman Empire, worldly political powers had dominated and repressed the spiritual followers of the inner Kingdom of God. The Eastern Roman Emperors and the Western Roman Popes had seized power, cementing their positions by bringing Babylonian religious practices into the Church and forming the Babylonian Church. Yet the true Church remained, with generations

living and dying within the community of Christ which was dominated but not extinguished by the Babylonian Church. (1)

The rise of the kings and nations in Europe, which led to the overthrow of Papal secular power, had little effect on the Babylonian Church at first. The European kings simply took the place of the Pope as the “divinely appointed” Babylonian authority, while using the Papacy to promote their own power. (2) The Pope still reigned supreme in religious matters, but the European kings could no longer be counted upon to crush “heretics,” as evidenced by the survival of John Wycliffe in the Fourteenth Century. At the same time, reformers whose kings supported Papal authority faced death, as shown by the martyrdom of John Huss. (3) Babylon still held the sword.

Thus, it was no idle gesture when a monk named Martin Luther challenged the Church by nailing his objections to a Church door in 1517. (4) The immediate grievance he expressed involved the sale of indulgences, or licenses to sin, in order to finance the building of St. Peter’s Cathedral in Rome. The Pope, however, saw Luther’s challenge not as a call to reform but as a threat to his authority. Therefore, Luther was excommunicated in 1521 and condemned to death as a heretic in 1522. (5) But Luther was saved from the stake by a German prince, Frederick, and the Reform movement he started had spread to hundreds of thousands of believers by 1525. (6)

The heart of Luther’s Reform movement lay in its call for a return to the authority of the Scriptures. Many of the encrustments of Church tradition including the Babylonian practices of the all-powerful Pope, the dominant priesthood, the veneration of Mary, and the exaltation of saints, were swept away. The great teaching of salvation by faith, not by works, was rediscovered, further liberating believers from bondage to the priestly class. The New Testament concept of the Church as a community of brothers, with the recognition that the layman’s calling and contribution were as acceptable to God as the priest’s, energized believers to follow Christ in their daily lives. (7) The power of the internal Kingdom of God was beginning to manifest itself on a large scale.

War was inevitable, and the German Protestant princes banded together to defend themselves and their faith. But just as Charles V, the ruler of Spain and the Emperor of the Germans, was preparing to crush the Protestants in 1530, the Turks began an offensive against Charles V’s Balkan holdings. Realizing that he could not fight both the Turks and the German princes, Charles V had to abandon his plans for an all-out religious war. (8) The Reformation in Germany was thus saved by the Turks. The Peace of Augsburg, in 1555, recognized the legal right of the Protestants to exist in those states where the princes were also Protestant. (9) This principle, known as “Territorial Tolerance,” was an important stepping stone to that of religious liberty. It also marked the death knell for the concept of “Christendom.” (10)

The King of England, Henry VIII, launched his own version of Territorial Tolerance in 1534 when he removed the English Church from Papal control as a part of his plan to divorce his wife so that he could remarry and have a male heir. However, Henry VIII was not a Protestant, and he retained the Catholic practices in the English Church. (11) It was his son, Edward VI, who, upon becoming king in 1547, allowed the Reformation to come to England. But only six years later, Edward’s sister Mary steered England back toward Rome, killing many leading Protestants and forming an alliance with Spain’s Charles V by marrying his son. However, “Bloody Mary’s” reign was only five years long, and Elizabeth I returned England to Protestantism in 1558. (12)

It was not until 1545 that the Pope began a response within the Church to the reforms begun by Martin Luther, calling a church council known as the Council of Trent. The Council itself, perhaps hoping that the reformers would be crushed militarily, did not issue its findings for another eighteen years. The result was a total repudiation of the Reform effort, holding Church tradition superior to Scripture and reaffirming the Papacy, the sacraments, indulgences, saints, and the whole package of Babylonian Church practices. (13) To counter the new spirituality of the reformers, the Council of Trent stepped up the Sacramentalist observance of the Eucharist from an annual to a weekly ritual. (14) The Pope also burned Protestant books, instituted the Inquisition in Rome, and formed the Jesuit Society to lead the counter attack by the Popes, known as the “Counter Reformation.” (15)

The stage was set for a full scale civil war between the Protestant Christian states and the Catholic Christian states. After all, the logic of “Territorial Tolerance” demanded that the ruler of a state had to be overthrown to bring about any change in religion. That same logic permitted the rulers, whether Catholic or Protestant, to persecute religious dissidents within their territories. Sadly, even Luther abandoned his commitment to religious liberty. Since there were sincere Christians both in the Catholic and Protestant ranks, the Reformation and Counter Reformation produced a long list of martyrs. (16)

Even before the Council of Trent had finished its work, the religious wars began, with the Protestant Netherlands rebelling against Catholic Spain in 1560. (17) The Protestant English were drawn into the war with Spain, narrowly avoiding overthrow because of the near miraculous defeat of a massive Spanish naval invasion force in 1588. (18) No sooner had the Dutch won their freedom from Spain in 1618, than a new religious war broke out among the German states. (19) That war ended thirty years later, in 1648, with the Protestants accepting the Catholic gains won by conquest (20), just as the English were finishing their civil war which established a short lived Protestant government. (21) The French, meanwhile, had removed their Protestant minority from power by 1642 (22) and finally drove them out of the country by revoking their religious liberty in 1685. (23) Back in England, the Catholic-leaning monarch James II was overthrown in 1688, (24) with his followers in Ireland and Scotland defeated by 1690 and again in a second rebellion in 1715. (25)

It was during those tumultuous years that one group of persecuted Christians began to look beyond the shores of Europe for a safe place to worship God. The English Puritans, despised by the Catholic and Anglican Church alike, had moved to the more tolerant nation of Holland in 1607. Under the leadership of William Bradford, a group sailed for the New World, establishing a colony on Massachusetts Bay in 1619. (26) By 1630, there were 1000 Puritans in Massachusetts, with 30,000 arriving over the next decade. (27) The desire for religious freedom started a flood of immigration which ultimately produced the largest population shift in human history. (28) Not surprisingly, it was in the American colonies that the concept of religious freedom first took hold. (29)

The Protestant Reformers had struck a mighty blow against the Babylonian bondage of the Church. Their revelation of the authority of the Scriptures had removed many Babylonian practices such as the worship of the Virgin Mary from the Church. The power of the priests to stand between God and man was greatly limited, although many of the Protestant clergy moved back into this Babylonian priesthood in time. (30) But the greatest failure of the Reformation was the failure of its leaders to let the inner Kingdom of God advance the Kingdom. By using force to compel an outward form of religion, (31) they had fallen into the same Babylonian trap as had ensnared the Church from the days of Constantine.

The final breaking of the Babylonian stronghold of forced outward observance did not come until the European religious wars had exhausted both the Catholics and the Protestants. The answer which allowed the stronghold to be broken was religious toleration, or the idea that different religions could co-exist in the same state. (32) The idea was slow to take hold at first, with the English allowing toleration of only non-Anglican Protestant Churches in 1689, (33) just four years after the French had moved to crush their Protestant Churches. (34) Ultimately, however, the concept of religious toleration was accepted, and the Age of Denominational Christianity was born. (35) The tyranny of outward religion over the inward Kingdom of God was broken.

Thus, religious freedom was the great legacy of the Reformation, though it was unimagined by the reformers themselves.

The Lord had begun to cleanse His church by removing the Babylonian encrustments within the Church and the Babylonian bondage to the kings and nations which had bound the Church since the Fourth Century. Freedom of religion really meant freedom from control by the worldly, the powerful, and the ambitious. It was a wonderful gift.

But both the Church and Babylon would suffer as men, tasting freedom of religion, began to demand freedom from religion.

For liberty from God leads straight back into bondage.

PART EIGHT: BABYLON AND THE RELIGION OF NO GOD

“When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” I looked and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand.

Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying “A quart of wheat for a day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine.”

Revelation 6:5,6

Chapter 28

The Goddess of Liberty

On June 24, 1717, in London, England, a secret fraternal society first publicized its existence, beginning the public history of the Grand Lodge of Freemasonry. (1) The Grand Lodge grew to be one of the most influential organizations in history, with an impressive roster of members including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Winston Churchill, thirteen U.S. Presidents, and a gallery of kings, generals, and famous men. (2)

Yet, with all of these good men to its credit, there has always been something deeply troubling about Freemasonry. For, while Masons must believe in a supreme being, that being is assumed to be the same for all religions, whether Christian, Islamic, or Pagan. (3) Indeed, the lodges seem to lean toward Paganism, with extensive use of Pagan Egyptian symbolism being seen in Masonic rites and lodges. (4) The most famous Masonic symbol, which also appears on U.S. currency, is the “all seeing eye,” the ancient symbol for the Egyptian sun god Ra. (5)

With all of this Pagan Egyptian symbolism, one would at first be led to believe that the Masonic lodges had managed to revive the Babylonian religion by opening up a secret stream of Babylonian belief in the initiated Masons. Paradoxically, despite its Babylonian trappings, the Masonic lodge represents a repudiation of both the Babylonian religion and Christianity. To understand the true meaning of Freemasonry and the age it embodies, however, one must study its roots in Neo-Paganism and Christianity.

Neo-Paganism began with the rediscovery of ancient Pagan Latin and Greek texts during the late Middle Ages period known as the Renaissance. (6) The Church had tolerated Pagan trappings since the days of Constantine, and the Pagan traditions had remained alive through astrology, which was falsely thought to have scientific underpinnings. (7) Indeed, even the Popes used astrology to plan great events. (8) Under one such Pope, Leo X, Rome became the capital of the Renaissance. He had no problems with ancient Paganism, (9) but he did with Reform, and it was Leo X who condemned Martin Luther. (10)

The open Paganism of the Renaissance actually masked a much deeper philosophical change. Philosophers like Petrarch (1304-1374) began to develop doctrines which exalted “human” values and trivialized the role of God. This philosophy of “humanism” drew upon Greek philosophy to conclude that only this life mattered. (11) The wars of the Reformation and Counter Reformation only served to strengthen Humanistic thought, with many concluding that any strongly held religious belief was evil. Absolute religious beliefs, it was thought, had to be replaced by reason, for only by reasoning could the truth be found. (12)

The search for “truth” marked the beginning of the Age of Science, and, in that realm, brought about many beneficial advances. Men like Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1642), Kepler (1571-1630), and Newton (1642-1727) revolutionized our view of nature, bringing God’s creation into better focus. (13) But the philosophical search for truth tended to focus on mechanical explanations as well, moving away from the Creator and trying to live independently of spiritual principles. (14) Thus, a network of critics and religious skeptics, founded on Humanism and Secularism, and embracing Pagan classical thought practices, came to be very influential in Europe and the American colonies by the Eighteenth Century. (15) This movement, devoted to science and hostile to both Babylon and Christianity, was known as the Enlightenment. (16)

The religion of the Enlightenment was known as Deism. (17) They believed in a supreme being, but thought he did not interact with the world he had created. They denied all miracles and special revelation as “superstition,” preferring to try to understand the supreme being through reasoning. In reality, the supreme being of Deism and its cousin, Freemasonry, is a god who is so far removed from the world that he is no god at all. Thus, the Enlightenment produced a new world religion—the Religion of No God. Deists did not want to reform the Church, either in its Christian or Babylonian forms. Instead, they wanted to destroy it. The most influential Deist, located at the center of the Enlightenment in Paris, was Voltaire (1694-1778). (18) The Parisians would pay a heavy price for their support of the Enlightenment.

But let us return to the Freemasons, to show how their Pagan trappings trace into Enlightenment values. The Lodge did have deep historical roots, but not in ancient Egypt or Israel as many claim. As for the Egyptian items, they derive from the Renaissance fascination with the mythology and writing of Egypt. (19) Instead of Egypt, the Masons trace back to the remnant of the Knights Templar, who fled France and England to settle in Scotland. (20) Traces of the Templar influence remain in Masonic terminology, such as “Tyler,” which derives from Medieval French, and the lodge “pavement” which imitated the Templar Battle Flag. Both the

Masons and Templars have significant relationships to the Temple of Solomon, and the Templar sign of the Seal of Solomon (a form of the Star of David) is traceable to the Masonic symbol of the compass and square. (21) And July 24, the day that the Lodge revealed itself, was the sacred day of the Templars. (22)

As Scottish citizens, the Templars naturally became very involved in Scottish politics shortly after their arrival, and they were believed to have been decisive in Bruce's victory which gained Scottish independence in 1314. (23) When the Scottish Stuart family ascended to the English throne, the Templars, now known as Freemasons, were loyal supporters. And when the Stuarts took up the cause of Catholicism against the English, the Scottish Masons became associated with the Catholic cause. (24) Many of them died, supporting the Catholic kings, in the Wars of 1688 and 1715. (25) Because of their support for the Stuarts, the Masons were suspected as traitors in Protestant England. It was the desire to remove this taint of treason that caused the English Grand Lodge to announce itself in 1717, effectively supplanting the Scottish lodges which had birthed the movement. (26)

To show their loyalty, members of the Grand Lodge adopted a rule which required belief in the Deist Supreme Being, but which forbade the discussion of religion. (27) This rule of silence allowed the Protestants and Catholics to coexist in the organization, but also gave cover to the Deists who fit in neither camp. (28) In any event, the rule of silence allowed the Masonic Lodge to be recognized as an orthodox institution, and become fully integrated into English society. (29) Thus, the Deistic Masons, opponents to both Babylon and Christianity, achieved their extraordinary influence on both England and its American colonies.

To say that the Deists and Enlightenment Philosophers were anti-Christian is not to say that none of their values were shared by Christians. Tolerance, respect for others, and support for religious freedom are all Christ-like virtues. And secular government would have seemed to have been an improvement to both Christians and Deists over the abuses of power found in both Protestant and Catholic nations. (30) It is even true that there was a Christian movement within the Freemasons, known as the Antient Lodge, which was formed in 1751. (31) From that time until 1813, when the Antients merged with the Grand Lodge and abandoned Christianity, there were a number of honestly Christian Masons. And, even after that merger, there were many who believed that they could be Christian Masons. (32)

It was during the period of the Christian Antient Lodge that Freemasonry became a powerful force in the American Colonies. The Masonic Lodges were responsible for spreading the doctrines of tolerance and human rights which overlapped between the values of the Enlightenment and Christianity. (33) These values found their expression in both the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and in the American Constitution in 1787. (34) And when George Washington, victor of the American Revolution and first President of the United States, took his oath of office, he swore this oath of office on the Holy Bible from a Christian Masonic Lodge. (35)

We may never be able to untangle the elements of Christianity, Deism, and Enlightenment philosophy which underlie the American Revolution. Certainly the Americans, Masonic or not, claimed to be fully Christian. (36) And the Christian basis of the American Revolution, which produced the greatest nation on Earth, can be clearly seen when the American Revolution is compared to the other great revolution of the Enlightenment Era, the French Revolution. For in France, the home of Deism and the Enlightenment, (37) there was no powerful set of Christian values to prevent the unraveling of society once the Revolution started. (38) The American

Revolution produced freedom and greatness, while the French Revolution led only to terror and bondage.

The French ordeal began with a governmental financial crisis and series of crop failures which, in 1789, produced great hardship on the poor people of France. The French king, Louis XVI, was a weak ruler who was unable to force the nobility to help bear the burden of the financial crisis and relieve the suffering of the people. (39) The Enlightenment philosophers, emboldened by the success of the American Revolution, felt that they could achieve the same results. So they rode the wave of popular unrest to overthrow the monarchy. (40) Within a few years the king had been beheaded, the revolutionaries had turned on themselves in the famous Reign of Terror, and France was at war with the nations of Europe, all of which feared a spread of the Revolution and its terror. (41)

A particular target of the Enlightenment revolutionaries was the Catholic Church in France, which had not elected to eliminate its Babylonian Church characteristics in the era of the Reformation. (42) All of the lands of the Church, about twenty percent of the land in France, (43) were seized by the government to finance its many crises and wars. (44) Churches were removed from Papal control and as many as 40,000 priests fled for their lives. The priests who remained became government employees. (45)

But the architects of the Revolution were not satisfied merely to control the Babylonian Church. They set about to create a new religion, (46) the Deistic Religion of No God, in place of the old. The churches were converted to “Temples of Reason,” reflecting the devotion of the Enlightenment Revolutionaries to the replacement of Religion by Reason. (47) Great Cathedrals like Notre Dame in Paris were defaced, and historic Church properties like the Abbey at Cluny were destroyed. (48) The revolutionaries even instituted a new calendar, removing all religious holidays and celebrations. (49)

As a part of their campaign against the Babylonian Church, the revolutionaries attacked the most worshipped figure head on. Thus, it was not God, or even Jesus, but the Virgin Mary who had to be overthrown. To replace the Virgin Mary in the hearts of the people, they created a number of “goddesses” who represented Enlightenment virtues. (50) At certain festivals created to further the new state religion, the government even hired actresses to play the “goddesses.” (51) While there were several “goddesses” representing Reason, Justice, Equality, and other concepts, the main “goddess” was the “Goddess of Liberty.” (52)

Thus, the Religion of No God came to be symbolized by the Goddess of Liberty, a goddess who was no goddess at all. In fact, the Goddess of Liberty became one of the most enduring icons of the Secular Age, expanding far beyond the borders of France. The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, a gift from the French, is perhaps the largest rendition of the Goddess of Liberty. Similar versions can be found in the U.S. Capitol Building and in the Capitol Buildings of many states, evidencing the fact that the most powerful religion of our time is the secular Religion of No God, represented by the Goddess of Liberty.

The irony of the Goddess of Liberty is simply that liberty without God is no liberty at all. The French Revolution, which spawned the symbol, quickly degenerated into a series of bloody massacres known as the Reign of Terror. The people, longing for stability and the return of domestic peace, were only too eager to accept the dictatorial rule of Napoleon. (53) Making peace with the Babylonian Church, Napoleon received his crown as Emperor of France from Pope Pius VII. However, unlike his ancient predecessor, Clovis, Napoleon ruled by his own authority, not the Church's. And even at his coronation Napoleon showed his power by seizing

the crown from the Pope and placing it on his own head. (54) Napoleon's ascension marked the end of any hope for freedom for the people.

Instead of freedom, Napoleon conscripted huge armies, first to defend France, then to extend his power over all of Europe. At a time when an army of 100,000 was thought to be enormous, he raised an army of 1,000,000. The huge numerical advantages, plus his own military genius, made him the master of Europe (55) until his enemies learned to raise similarly large armies. (56) By the time of his defeat in 1815 by the nations of Europe, he had left a legacy of massive armies for future European wars.

Thus, not only did he deny freedom to his people, he converted them, and all of Europe, into military conscripts who could now be forced to fight and die for the ambitions of their national leaders. (57)

The Goddess of Liberty, like the false goddesses of Babylon, had proven to be only an illusion. Her legacy was bondage and war.

And the Religion of No God, which she represented, was about to carry bondage and war throughout the Earth.

Chapter 29

The Empire of the Ten Kings

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI divided the world outside of Europe between the Portuguese and the Spanish. It turned out that he was premature. (1)

The wars of the Reformation and Counter Reformation kept the other European nations occupied in Europe for the next hundred years, but by the beginning of the Seventeenth Century, England and Holland had begun to expand their overseas empires. Soon the French joined in the scramble, as the nations of Europe began to focus on the trading opportunities made possible by their superior technology. (2)

It was the lucrative trade in furs which first drew the Europeans to North America. The French had begun trading in 1534 along the St. Lawrence River, and moved south and west through the Great Lakes into the Mississippi River Valley, founding New Orleans in 1718. (3) The English traded furs around Hudson's Bay, while the Dutch settled in to the Hudson River Valley, founding New Amsterdam (later New York City) in 1617. But the English, who were establishing their own colonies along the Atlantic Coast, conquered New Amsterdam in 1664, leaving only the French to oppose their ambitions. (4) Thus, by the end of the Seventeenth Century, the French, the English, and a surviving Dutch Colony in South America had joined the Spanish and Portuguese as masters of the New World. (5)

The slave trade between Africa and the New World was at first a Portuguese monopoly, but by 1600 the West Africans were selling slaves to the English, Dutch, and French as well. (6) The British established a colony on the Gambia River in 1661. The Dutch, targeting the Asian trade, established a colony at the Southern tip of Africa in 1652, marking the beginning a large European settlement there. (7) Moving east, the English, French, and Dutch challenged the Portuguese for the trade between Africa and India, ultimately leaving little to Portugal. (8)

Unlike North America and Africa, the Europeans found powerful, well-organized kingdoms ruling over the vast populations of Asia. At the beginning of the Seventeenth Century the Indian kingdom was ruled by the successors to Genghis Khan, the Moguls. But the Moguls collapsed in

the Mid-Eighteenth Century under an attack from the Persians, Afghans, and Hindus. Because their collapse occurred during one of the Anglo-French wars, the Europeans were drawn into the conflict because of their trading relationships. As a result, the English, through the East India Company, came into possession of the Indian state of Bengal. By 1793 the English had begun warfare with other Indian principalities, and conquered the bulk of India in the next twenty years. Thus did the English come to dominate the nation of India. (9)

The China trade was begun by the English in 1711 at the southern Chinese city of Canton, (10) near the Sixteenth Century Portuguese trading post of Macao. (11) The principal Chinese export turned out to be tea, which became a national rage in England and which ultimately provided ten percent of the tax revenues of England. (12) And the English, not wishing to pay cash for this import, searched for a product to trade for tea. They found it in the Indian product opium, for which there was plenty of demand in China. Such was the allure of the opium trade that the English fought a war with China when the Chinese tried to prevent its import. After winning the Opium War of 1840, the English took a rocky anchorage near Canton as a colony, beginning the city of Hong Kong. (13)

Defeat by the English had a demoralizing effect on the Manchu rulers of China. (14) Soon European trade demands had led to the founding of trading posts all along the China Coast, with the largest being Shanghai. (15) After trading posts came territorial concessions, which were forced on the Chinese by the French, Germans, and Russians. (16) The French also dealt the Chinese a humiliating blow when they destroyed the Chinese fleet during the French Conquest of Indo-China in 1884. (17) All of these indignities took their toll on the prestige of the Emperor, the Son of Heaven. In 1912 the Emperor, and the longest ruling succession of god-kings on Earth, was overthrown, bringing Secular rule to China. (18)

By the time the Chinese Emperor had gone, almost all the world had been brought under the domination of the European nations. The whole continent of Africa, saving only Ethiopia, was divided among the European nations of England, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. (19) The Russians had pushed across Northern Asia to the Pacific, (20) and all of Southern Asia except Siam was ruled by Europeans. (21) Those nations which retained their sovereignty, like China, did so at the price of trade concessions and submission to the power of the Europeans. Thus, the "Ten Kings" did in fact rule the world.

The colonial policies of the European powers ranged from benign to genocidal. The English normally tried to work through existing local authorities, although they did drive out native populations in places like South Africa where they established agricultural colonies. The French, on the other hand, tended to destroy local authority and put French administration in its place. In Equatorial Africa, the French, Germans, and Belgians reduced the people to virtual slavery by turning them over to rule by trading companies. In the Belgian Congo, these brutal policies led to a fifty percent population decline from the 1880's to 1908. (22) And, of course, millions of Africans were sold into slavery as well. (23)

To be sure, there were Christians who tried to mitigate the brutality of European colonization. William Penn, the Quaker who organized the English North American colony of Pennsylvania, required that Indian lands be purchased instead of taken without consent, and provided equal legal treatment for them. (24) The English Christian, William Wilberforce, led the campaign which abolished slavery in the British Empire in 1833. (25) In the United States, Christian opponents of slavery provided the moral fiber necessary to abolish slavery through the American Civil War. (26)

But God had a much more powerful role for His people than limiting the harm done by the Europeans. For the purpose of the “Ten Kings” was to accomplish God’s plan by destroying Babylon (Rev. 17:16,17). What the Europeans accomplished was to overthrow the national Babylonian rulers of the lands they conquered. Like the Chinese Emperor, whose claim to be a god-king was proven false by European power, the Babylonian leaders of the Americas, Africa, and Asia were rendered impotent. The barriers to the Gospel which had stood for millennia were suddenly torn down, and the way was readied for the Word of the Lord to go forth to the nations.

In 1793 the father of modern missions, William Carey, went to India as an evangelist. The British rulers of India refused to help him, but a Dutch company gave him a job so he could begin his mission. Because of his example, a worldwide missions movement was born. Dr. David Livingston opened up Africa to Christianity, penetrating deep into the interior to reach the peoples. Along with the Gospel, the missionaries provided schools and hospitals as tangible evidence of God’s love. (27)

The removal of Babylonian barriers opened the people to receive God’s message of salvation. For example, in 1867 in India a tribe responded to the Gospel by telling the evangelist that the tribe knew they had abandoned the real God out of fear of the demon spirits in ancient times. They accepted Christianity because they had been looking for a way to return to the real God. (28) Several Burmese tribes had been awaiting a Holy Book, and when missionaries brought the Bible they gladly became Christians. (29) Some people even recognized that the Real Seed of Woman was echoed in their sky god traditions, and decided to become Christians. (30) The captives of Babylon were at long last being set free.

God had always intended to bring all of the nations back to Him:

“With your blood you purchased men for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation.”

Rev. 5:9b

And He will hold off the end of the age until it happens:

“And the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Matt. 24:14

The wisdom of God’s plan can be seen in the extent of Christian influence today in the Babylonian nations which were overthrown by the “Ten Kings.” In India, where modern missions began, militant Hindus have fought Christian expansion, (31) but there are some people groups which are now mostly Christian. (32) Many of the lowest caste members, the “Untouchables,” have been set free through the Gospel, and there is now a strong thrust for evangelization from Indian, not European, missionaries. (33) In China, the Chinese Christian community has endured under severe persecution with no outside help, and grown from an estimated one million in 1949, the year of the Communist takeover, to ninety million at the end of the twentieth century. (34)

African Christianity is spreading rapidly in Sub-Sahara Africa, with an estimated one hundred million believers. (35) The African nation of Nigeria, despite strong Islamic opposition from its northern tribes, is about fifty percent Christianized and is one of the major missionary sending nations in the world. (36) South America has also experienced a strong growth of

Christianity which has overcome the powerful influence of the Babylonian Church and native Babylonian religions. (37)

All of this vast harvest of souls was made possible once the Babylonian strongholds over the nations had been weakened by the empire of the “Ten Kings.”

But by now Babylon was not the greatest threat facing the Church.

The work begun by the Goddess of Liberty in the French Revolution was about to bear its bitter fruit.

Chapter 30

The Triumph of Secularism

Even before the French Revolution had launched the “Goddess of Liberty” on her destructive path, the Enlightenment Era philosophers had moved from Deism, the belief in a distant but uninterested God, to Atheism, the belief in no God at all. (1)

But the problem with Atheism, from a “scientific” Enlightenment Era viewpoint, was that there was no scientific way to account for the existence of the universe, life, or mankind. The scientists of that era saw no contradiction between science and Creation, and found that the Biblical Flood account was a fully rational explanation for the geologic world around them. (2) The Creation itself was, and still is, a mystery which can only be understood with reference to its Creator (Ro. 1:20).

The idea that life could generate spontaneously without God is actually quite ancient, originating with the Greeks and supported by such luminaries as Alexander the Great’s racist teacher, Aristotle. The great Creationist scientist, Louis Pasteur finally proved with his microscope that all life we can observe comes from reproduction after its own kind, (3) just as the Bible says (Ge. 1:25). The Atheists, however, continued looking for some way to avoid the fact of Creation, and the first modern theory of Evolution was finally proposed by Jean Baptiste de Lamarck. The theory failed to satisfy even the Atheists, and was soon abandoned. (4)

It was not until Charles Darwin wrote his book Origin of the Species that the Atheists found their Evolutionary argument to banish God from His Creation. Darwin followed up his success with an Evolutionary book proposing that humans descended from apes, Descent of Man, in 1871. (5) Atheistic scientists around the world scrambled to find the “missing link” between apes and humans, but with more faith in Evolution than true science. The 1891 discovery of “missing link” Java Man bones turned out to be monkey and elephant bones mixed together. Another “missing link,” the 1912 Piltdown man, proved to be a complete forgery. But, despite these disappointments, nothing could shake the faith of the Evolutionists in their theory. (6) Even today this relic of Nineteenth Century science remains an article of Secular faith against Twentieth Century discoveries such as DNA, which is too complex to have arisen through any random Evolutionary process. (7)

The idea that humans had arisen independently of any God began a downward spiral in morality and philosophy in Nineteenth Century Europe. Some of the new ideas which appeared were based on poor science, like the Java Man, while others were fabrications designed to support a belief system, like Piltdown Man. People were robbed of belief in their divine purpose, thinking instead that they were merely accidents of nature. Even worse, there was no

fear of God to restrain the evil impulses of men. Christian teaching and values were rejected, with horrendous consequences. (8)

Perhaps nowhere was this loss of values better illustrated than in the rise of European racism. The Bible teaches, and modern science proves, that all races of man have a common origin, (9) and the Scriptures require believers to love and respect all races. Evolutionists, however, came to believe that the races of humanity were on different evolutionary levels, with their race, the Europeans, at the top. Africans, especially, were viewed as inferior human beings. It was not long before Africans came to be thought of as not human at all, but a sub-human species. (10) This erroneous Evolutionary classification of Africans as sub humans was then used to provide justification for the European colonization of Africa and the atrocities committed against the Africans. (11) The same sort of Evolutionist racist theory led to the murder of six million Jews in Nazi Germany. (12)

Another evil birthed from Nineteenth Century Evolutionary ideas was the idea that Evolution applied to human history as well as to living organisms. The most able proponent of this view was Karl Marx, whose writings formed the underpinning of Socialism and Communism. (13) To Marx, the liberal Democracies of Europe with their prosperous middle classes were simply a transition stage of Evolution, with the final stage being a Utopian state ruled by the working classes. (14) He advocated violent overthrow of the existing European societies and the Christian religion, although he died without seeing the bloody results of his philosophies. (15) It remained for his followers, the Communists in backward Russia, to test out his theories. (16) Millions died in the process, and finally, at the end of the Twentieth Century, even the Russian Communists concluded that Marx's theories did not work. (17)

The Pseudo-scientific ideas of the Nineteenth Century eventually found their way into the Church. Many theologians tried to reconcile the Theory of Evolution to Christian belief, concluding that Evolution must have been the work of God. Ultimately, many of those theologians came to reject other Scripture teachings as well, with some concluding that all religions led to God. (18) Worse still were the radical theologians who rejected the idea of any supernatural influence as unscientific, proposing a form of Christianity with no actions by God and no resurrection of Christ. (19) So successful were the radical theologians in destroying the Christian faith of their followers that their homeland, Germany, became the least Christian country in Europe. (20) It was this loss of Christian influence which opened Germany to takeover by the racist Nazi party and precipitated the Jewish Holocaust and the Second World War. (21)

The response of the Catholic Church, still under the influence of the Babylonian System, was more true to its beliefs than the response of many Protestants, although it was no more effective. The Popes denounced the new socialist theories, (22) but also condemned Democracy and the Protestants. (23) And, as with the Council of Trent, the Popes retreated from progress by moving deeper into the Cult of Mary. Thus, in 1854, Mary was pronounced to have been immaculately conceived as Christ was, while in 1950, the bodily "assumption" of Mary to be "Queen of Heaven," a sort of fourth member of the Trinity, was announced. (24) The effect of this Babylonian exaltation of Mary was to drive further wedges between Protestant and Catholic believers, (25) and to weaken the Church's appeal to the Secular world outside its walls.

The Popes also fought a losing battle to retain their worldly kingdom aside from the Church. Frightened by the unification of Italy into a Secular nation, Pope Pius IX convened a Church council in Rome which proclaimed that the Pope was infallible, moving closer to the god-priest role assumed by Hammurabi and the ancient kings of Babylon. (27) The Italians, however, were

unimpressed with his claims, and besieged Rome later that year, ending the Secular kingdom of the Pope in 1870. Even then, the Popes refused to accept their loss of temporal power, until the Italian Fascist dictator Mussolini forced the Pope to accept the Vatican Hill as his only kingdom in 1929. (28) The long rule of the Pontifex Maximus in the city of Rome was over.

The Babylonian rule in the Third Rome, which was established in Russia after the fall of the Second Rome at Constantinople, (29) also did not survive in the rising tide of Secularism. The Russian Czars, or “Caesars,” fought to limit the influence of European liberalism in Russia, only liberating the serfs in 1861. (30) The last Czar, Nicholas II, was a weak man who was manipulated into foreign alliances which proved disastrous for Russia (31) while allowing a greedy and rapacious monk named Rasputin to dominate his wife and councilors through religious mysticism. When the inevitable war finally came to Russia, the last Caesar and his Babylonian System were swept away. (32)

Secularism had triumphed in Europe, driving out the last vestige of Babylonian political power and leading many Christians to lose their faith. And the Secular Europeans had used their superior technology to conquer the whole world. (33)

But now the technology of the Europeans would turn them against themselves.

They had sown the wind. They would reap the whirlwind.

PART NINE: THE END OF THE AGE

“When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say ‘Come!’ I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the Earth to kill by sword, famine, and plague, and by the wild beasts of the Earth.”

Revelation 6:7,8

Chapter 31

Nation Will Rise Against Nation

Long before the political upheaval of the French Revolution burst upon Europe, a quieter but much more far reaching economic revolution had begun in England. In 1760 France had five times the population of England, but by 1880, England’s population had overtaken the French. This English population explosion was caused by the Industrial Revolution. (1)

The moving force of the Industrial Revolution was the harnessing of energy sources beyond those of human or animal power. Water power from streams provided a small beginning, but the big breakthrough came when coal began to fuel industry. New technology grew up around the coal power source, with steam engines becoming the first powerful mechanical energy machines. (2) More importantly, the steam engine moved industry away from streambeds into cities, with steam powered rail engines moving goods from manufacture to market by the early Nineteenth Century. Coal power made London a city of 4.7 million, and the capital of one third of the world, by the end of the Nineteenth Century. (3)

The Continental European nations were about fifty years behind England in their industrial development, hiring British engineers to try to close the gap. (4) In the 1850’s the race became

more military than economic when the Bessemer process for making inexpensive, high quality steel was discovered. Better steel meant better cannon, and an arms race was begun as industrialists scrambled to meet the demands of their governments. The most successful of these industrialists, Alfred Krupp, made the cannons which allowed the Prussians to unify the principalities of Germany into a nation under their leadership. (5)

Krupp's triumph was purchased at the expense of the French, who were humiliated by his cannons in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. (6) As a prize of war, the Germans seized the resource-rich Alsace Lorraine region from France. (7) To add insult to injury, the Germans crowned Wilhelm I Emperor of the newly united Germany at the Versailles Palace outside of Paris while waiting for the French to surrender. Germany had become the most powerful nation on the European continent. (8)

At the Eastern end of Europe the sleeping giant of Russia, roused by the Napoleonic wars, was beginning to flex its muscles as well. Desiring a warm water trade route, the Russians set their sights on the Dardanelles, the narrow straight which controlled access from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. The home of ancient Troy, the straits were controlled by Constantinople, the Second Rome, which had been renamed Istanbul by its Turkish conquerors. (9) As a cloak for their imperial ambitions, the Russians fostered the concept of "Pan Slavism," which sought to justify their expansion by championing the rights of the Orthodox Slavic peoples of the Balkans. (10)

The Turks were saved from the Russians by the British, who fought the Crimean War against Russia to prevent them from competing with English sea power by gaining the Dardanelles. (11) However, the Russians did succeed in helping establish the Orthodox states of Greece, (12) Bulgaria, and Serbia in the Balkans. (13) However, by weakening the Turks, the Russians had also encouraged the imperial ambitions of the Austrians, who, with their allies the Germans, began to work against the Russians. (14) The Germans had also begun to fear that their natural resource base was too small, coveting the resources of the Russian Ukraine. The Russians were thus driven to ally themselves with their former enemies, England and France, against Germany and Austria. (15)

By 1914 Europe had become an armed camp, with each nation enlisting huge armies through universal conscription. (16) The Secular world view had prevailed over the Christian warnings against the Godlessness of a society which idolized science and, increasingly, the nation state itself. Then, on June 28, 1914, a Serbian nationalist assassinated the Austrian Crown Prince at Sarajevo in Bosnia, beginning a chain of events which brought first Russia and Austria, and then all of their allies, to war. (17) But the armies of Europe, which had won such easy victories against the pre-industrial peoples of the world, found no easy victories when fighting between themselves. (18)

The nations soon discovered that the Industrial Revolution had turned the killing of warfare into a ruthlessly efficient industry. The French, for example, saw forty-four percent of their soldiers killed or wounded, suffering combat deaths of 1,700,000 men. British losses were 1,000,000 men, and the ineffective Italian war effort cost 600,000 lives, while the Germans, who lost the war, had 2,000,000 combat deaths. (19) The Russian army, which suffered innumerable casualties, finally collapsed, paving the way for the overthrow of the Czar and the rise of Communism. (20) The pride of Europe, born from the triumph of Secularism and fueled by the worship of science, lay crushed with its armies on the battlefields. But something new was coming from God.

Little noticed among the turmoil of those years was a British offensive against the Turks which carried the British from Egypt into Syria. The British had conquered Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews, and they began to follow through on their promise, given in the “Balfour Declaration” of 1917, to promote Jewish immigration. (21) This new immigration of Jews, when added to the Zionists who had settled in Palestine beginning in the late Nineteenth Century, increased the Jewish population of Palestine from about 80,000 to 450,000 over the next twenty years. (22) God was beginning to bring His people the Jews back to their land, as He had promised. (Ez. 36:33-35)

The British, however, were interested in the Middle East for quite another reason: oil. Even before the First World War, they had taken control of the oilfields of Persia to insure their military supplies. (23) They had also captured Iraq, the modern name for Babylonia, from the Turks during the war. (24) After the war the British remained in Iraq and Persia to control their oil reserves. The world balance of power was moving from those nations with coal resources to those who controlled the flow of oil. (25)

The first Europeans to fully grasp the potential of an oil-based war machine were the Germans. (26) They had been humiliated by the harsh terms of the treaty that ended World War I, and were further humbled by the economic trauma of the Great Depression. (27) In this climate of anger and fear arose a nationalistic, racist political party known as the Nazis, led by a man who considered himself to be the German Messiah, Adolph Hitler. (28) Hitler began re-arming Germany in 1933, designing a military force of aircraft, tanks, and motorized infantry which could strike quickly and decisively. This new form of warfare was known as “Blitzkrieg,” or “Lightning War.” (29)

Hitler’s objectives were to recover the resources Germany had lost in the First World War and to gain control of enough resources from other countries to insure German self-sufficiency. These target areas included the occupied Industrial Ruhr area of Germany, the mineral rich Alsace Lorraine which the French had taken back, the Polish coalfields, and most importantly, the vast oilfields east of the Russian Ukraine. (30) Hitler also planned to replace the populations of these areas, which he considered to be “sub-human,” with Germans to provide “living space” for the “Master Race.” (31) Darwin’s Evolution theory would be used to kill millions in the war to come.

As allies, Germany found Italy and Japan, two other “have not” nations which felt left out of the resource reallocation after World War I. (32) The Japanese were odd friends for the racist Germans, but they had enthusiastically adopted Western industrial and military methods, gaining worldwide respect when they defeated the Russians in 1905. (33) Interestingly, they had retained their god-king Emperor (34) who was believed to be descended from the sun goddess who was also known as the “Queen of Heaven” (35) like the ancient Babylonian prototype Inana. (36) The god-king of Japan set his sights on the oil of Dutch Indonesia and the trading colonies of the British, but first, in 1937, he invaded China to get its coal resources. The Japanese would expand their offensive to the British and the Americans when they felt the time was right. (37)

By 1939 Hitler was ready to strike, crushing the Polish army in a week of Blitzkrieg. In 1940 the Blitzkrieg triumphed over the French and drove the British army back to Britain. Unable to force a British surrender, Hitler nevertheless felt confident enough to move toward his real goal, the Russian oilfields, in a Blitzkrieg attack on Russia in 1941. (38) Following behind his advancing army Hitler sent his death squads to imprison and then murder the Jews and other undesirables like born again Christians. Almost all of the Jews in Europe, some six million men, women, and children, were killed by the Nazis. (39)

The fatal flaw in the Blitzkrieg strategy of the Germans, and the Japanese who had captured the Pacific rim imitating them, was not revealed until 1942. (40) During that year it became apparent that the Germans had failed to win a quick victory over the Russians and the Japanese had similarly failed with the Americans. The Germans had known that the Russians and Americans had vast industrial capacity, and soon the allies were producing war materials at an unprecedented rate. For example, during 1943 alone the Americans and British produced 30,000 tanks. By comparison, German industry could not even replace their losses. The Germans were finally crushed by the armies and material advantages of the Russians and Americans in 1945, (41) while the Japanese surrendered in the face of the ultimate product of American technological war making—the atomic bomb. (42) Hitler was dead in the wreckage of Germany, (43) and the god-king of Japan lost his status as an infallible god after losing to the Americans in 1945. (44)

In just three decades, from 1914 to 1945, the nationalistic wars of the Europeans had destroyed their world dominance. (45) The Russians from the east did not give up the lands they conquered, forming Communist puppet regimes in Eastern Europe and the Eastern portion of Germany. (46) Western Europe, with much of its industry wrecked by the war, was saved militarily from the Russians by the power of America, and restored economically by the American Marshall Plan. The centers of world power had shifted to Russia and America, leaving Europe divided between the Communist East and the Capitalist West. (47)

The collapse of European power led to the collapse of the worldwide Colonial Empire of the Europeans. (48) Even before the end of the Second World War the Japanese had fostered independence movements in the territories they controlled in Asia. As a result the Europeans were forced to grant independence to their colonies in Asia, and in the rest of the world European colonies demanded and eventually were granted their independence. However, the newly independent nations had learned militarism from the Europeans, and thus were prone to military coups and small wars. (49) In addition, the superpowers used the smaller nations to wage wars which could not be fought directly between them because of the potential for nuclear destruction. (50) Thus, the European military culture, which caused nation to rise against nation in Europe, spread division and warfare throughout the Earth.

A particularly tumultuous area was the Middle East. In British Palestine, the Jews had determined to form a Jewish state as a haven against any further Holocaust. There was worldwide sympathy for the Jewish cause, and strong support for an independent Jewish state from both of the superpowers, America and Russia. The British, who were unable to work out a peaceful compromise between the Arabs and Jews, turned the matter over to the United Nations, which voted for Israel's independence in November of 1947. On the day the British withdrew from Palestine, May 14, 1948, Israel declared its independence. For the first time since 63 B.C., there was an independent Jewish nation in the world. (51)

As soon as Israel had declared its independence, armies from the neighboring Arab states attacked the new nation. The Arabs simply could not tolerate a Jewish state, but, miraculously, the rag-tag Israeli Army put the Arabs to flight and established secure borders. Some two thirds of the Palestinian Arabs, believing their own propaganda, fled the country. By 1956, only 200,000 Arabs and Christians remained out of the 1,600,000 Israeli population. Similarly, most of the Jews in the Arab lands had been forced into Israel because of the rising Arab hatred for the Jews. (52)

Increased polarization by Arabs and Jews brought about new outbreaks of fighting in 1956 (53) and 1967, when the Jews captured Jerusalem and the Palestinian areas on the West Bank of

the Jordan River. An Arab counter- attack in 1973 was miraculously repulsed, with Israel winning yet another war against overwhelming odds. Finally, under pressure from America, most of the Arab states surrounding Israel reached an uneasy peace. (54) The nation of Israel was thus established and protected by God's intervention. And Jerusalem was once again at the center of the world stage, just as God had promised it would be at the end of the age (Zech. 12:2).

In the space of a few generations God had turned the world upside down. The proud nations of Europe had been humbled and stripped of their colonial empires. By the end of the Twentieth Century even the Russian superpower had disintegrated, (55) in an amazing recognition that Communism and its underlying Secular Religion had failed.

Some turned to God to fill the spiritual void which was produced by the Religion of No God.

But others moved further away from God, recreating the spiritual wickedness which had brought on the Flood of Noah.

Chapter 32

Revival of the Ancient Evil

There are really only four false religions in the world.

The false religion of Babylon, the Religion of the False Messiah, was based on the perversion of the "Seed of Woman" promise by kings and priests seeking control over their subjects. (1) We have traced this religion from its inception in Babylon under Nimrod through its spread to Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. (2) We have seen how the Babylonian System ruled the six great ancient empires of Babylon, Egypt, Assyria-Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome up until the time of Christ. (3) Babylon also regained control of the Christian world through the Babylonian Church, forming the seventh empire mentioned in John's vision of Babylon (4) (Rev. 17:10).

We have also seen how God judged Babylon by war and plague, and brought about the Age of the Ten Kings to destroy the political power of Babylon. (5) Emperors, Popes, god-kings, and god-priests fell one by one, with the last to fall being the Emperor of Japan in 1945. (6) Today the Babylonian Religion remains only as a religion, not a world power. The religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, the folk religions of Asia, the Shamanistic religions of Africa, the Pacific, and the Americas, and the cult of the Virgin Mary are today's legacy of Babylon, the Religion of the False Messiah. (7)

It was nearly three thousand years after Nimrod that the second false religion, the Religion of No Messiah, made its appearance. In the Seventh Century, Mohammed formed his Islamic community, galvanizing his Arab followers into a potent military force. In the years following Mohammed's death the Islamic armies swept westward across North Africa to Spain, eastward to Persia and the borders of China, and northward to the Russian Steppes. (8) Ultimately the Turks took Islam into Anatolia and the Balkans while the converted Mongolians took India and parts of Southeast Asia. The Religion of No Messiah remains as a potent political and religious force in the Islamic lands today.

A thousand years after Mohammed, the Europeans launched the third false religion, the Religion of No God. Born in the scientific "Enlightenment" era, the philosophers had moved

from the belief in a distant impotent God, known as Deism, to Atheism by the time of the French Revolution. (9) In the Nineteenth Century, Darwin's Theory of Evolution provided a way to eliminate God from His Creation, leading to a form of Evolutionary racism which allowed the European nations to justify their colonial empires. Nineteenth Century science also formed the basis for Karl Marx's economic theories, which spawned the Socialist and Communist movements of the Twentieth Century. (10) Even after the disastrous world wars between the Secular European nations and the collapse of Communism, the Religion of No God is the ruling force in all of the developed nations and virtually all of the non-Islamic undeveloped nations.

The problem inherent in the current world-dominant Secular view is that humans are spiritual beings who are not quite satisfied with the cut and dried "scientific" version of life. Even scientists are investigating matters which have heretofore belonged in the "spiritual" realm, like psychic powers and astral-projection. (11) More ominously, the concept of Evolution is being linked to this new spiritual quest, with the inference that those who do not adopt the new spirituality will have no place in the upcoming "Age of Enlightenment." And the conclusion reached by many is that the human race is evolving into godhood. (12) Thus, the fourth false religion, the Belief That We Are All God, is beginning to form before our very eyes.

As was the case with the Renaissance and Masonic movements which led to the Secular upheaval, many of the first steps of the Godhood Religion appear to be cloaked in Paganism. For, just as the Europeans went back to Paganism, thinking to find genuine scientific knowledge in the Renaissance, so the Godhood Religion proponents look to Paganism thinking to find spiritual insights. For example, author Murray Hope in The Sirius Connection seems to be promoting the ancient Egyptian gods, but closer examination reveals that she considers the Egyptian gods to be only esoteric principles, and is in fact promoting the idea of extra-terrestrial origin of ancient civilization. (13) Needless to say, no ancient Egyptian considered his gods to be mere principles. This tendency of New Age enthusiasts to adopt a fictional view of ancient religion is a constant source of embarrassment to the few genuine Pagans who remain among us. (14)

Another example of Pagan overlay to New Age beliefs comes from Jose Arguellas in The Mayan Factor. The current Mayan World Age ends in the year 2012, an event which Mr. Arguellas interprets as a time when the Earth's "crystal core" will attract galactic beings who will bring a new Evolutionary level to mankind. While this idea may sound far-fetched, and certainly was never contemplated by the Mayans, Mr. Arguellas was nevertheless able to attract a worldwide following to the 1987 event he called a "Harmonic Convergence," the precursor to the New Age. Interestingly, he wants to overthrow the Babylonian calendar calculations used worldwide and replace them with the Mayan calendar. This New Order of time would allow humanity to be "Harmonically Converted." (15)

Far more widespread than the "Harmonic Convergence" movement is the Transcendental Meditation movement founded by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. The movement claims not to be religious, but uses Hindu gods and techniques in its "Science of Creative Intelligence." However, the Maharishi teaches that each human is "in his true nature" a god (16), as opposed to Hindu teaching that only the Brahmans are god-priests. (17) Here again, as with the other New Age teachings, Evolution is expected to produce this state of godhood. Ominously, there is to be no place for the "unfit." (18)

The attitude of the New Age Movement toward the Evolutionary "unfit" can best be seen in the actions of the Maharishi's fellow New Ager and Aryan, Adolph Hitler. (19) He hated Christians (20) and was heavily influenced by the occultists of the day, especially Rudolph

Steiner and the Thule Society. Hitler believed that he was going to produce a new species of super humans through Evolution and selective breeding. (21) Those who were “unfit,” especially the Jews whom he hated, had to be exterminated so that they would not contaminate the Aryan bloodline. (22) It is no accident that the Nazis took as their symbol, the Swastika, an Aryan solar symbol used by anti-Semitic occultists. (23)

The Godhood Religion, which is known as the New Age Movement, is really not new at all. It originated in the Garden of Eden, when our first parents rebelled against God and decided to “be like God” (Ge. 3:5). This rebellion, which brought sin and death to the world (Ro. 5:12), is celebrated in New Age Mythology as the discovery of our “Luminous and Immortal” nature. (24) To the New Age, the Serpent is the hero.

Another aspect of the pre-Flood Godhood Religion was the apparent communion between humans and the “Nephilim,” meaning “fallen ones,” who apparently were demonic beings. (25) The New Age Religion also stresses demonic contact, as, for example, when Jose Arguelles explains that the source of his revelation is the spirit of the long dead Mayan King Pacal Votan, also known as “Galactic Agent 13 66 56.” It is also widely reported that Adolph Hitler heard voices and was demonically oppressed, if not possessed. (27) This direct communication with the kingdom of darkness in the Antediluvian Society may explain why it became so utterly wicked (Ge 6:5), just as it may explain Hitler’s love of destruction. (28)

Thus, the New Age Religion is the revival of the ancient Godhood Religion which produced such total evil that it brought the judgment of Noah’s Flood on mankind (Ge. 6:5-7). The modern version, with its Evolutionary excuse to destroy “unfit” races and opponents, promises to be just as bad when it arrives in full force. Perhaps this is why Jesus compared the times of His Second Coming to the times of Noah (Mat. 24:37-39).

But, before the Lord returns, another New Age King like Adolph Hitler will arise.

The Eighth and final King, as foretold by the Scriptures, must come at his appointed time.

Chapter 33

The Eighth King and the King of Kings

As we look toward the future, we find that the only sure guide is the same source that has explained the past: the Scriptures.

The history of Babylon is succinctly reported in the 17th Chapter of the book of Revelation. The disciple John saw a woman sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns, “Babylon the Great” (Rev. 17:3,5). The vision was explained as a picture of the nations ruled by the Babylonian System. The seven heads were Seven Kings (Rev. 17:10) and the ten horns were Ten Kings who came after the Seventh King (Rev. 17:12). We have followed these nations throughout history, down to today. Then, after the Ten Kings, comes an Eighth King who succeeds to their power (Rev. 17:11,13). We are now waiting for the Eighth King to appear.

The Vision of Babylon unfortunately contains little information about the Eighth King. To find out more, we must examine other Scriptures that contain additional pieces of the puzzle. And the place to begin is with the visions of the Prophet Daniel, whom God set in place to protect His people in Babylon. Like John, Daniel saw the future of the nations, and, also like John, his vision involved beasts which represented the nations. Daniel, however, saw four beasts (Da. 7:3-7) instead of one, picturing the kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. (1)

The fourth beast, representing Rome, had ten horns (Da. 7:7) just as the beast in John's vision. Thus, the two visions show the succession of nations through the era of the Ten Kings.

Daniel's vision continues with the picture of a little horn which grows up among the ten horns (Da. 7:7). This "little horn" is said to be a king who is different from the other ten (Da. 7:24). Bible scholars generally consider this "little horn" to be the final evil king, who is known popularly as the "Antichrist," (2) just as the Eighth King of John's Babylon vision is believed to be the "Antichrist." (3) Thus, since the "little horn" is the same as the Eighth King, Daniel's vision tells us that the Eighth King is not one of the Ten Kings, but comes from another nation. If one considers the Ten Kings to be the nations which have come out of the area of the Roman Empire, as implied by Daniel's vision of the ten-horned Roman beast (Da. 7:7), then we should look outside of the Old Roman Empire lands of Western Europe and the Mediterranean Basin for the homeland of the Eighth King.

Another clue from Daniel's vision is contained in the statement that the "little horn" appeared after the ten horns had been in place (Da. 7:8). This would imply that the Eighth King is a nation which came into being after the fall of the Roman Empire, and perhaps even after the breakup of Papal Rome which began in the Fourteenth Century. (4) The major "new" nations which have come into being since the end of the Roman Empire include the Turks who moved into Anatolia and overthrew the Second Rome, (5) the Russians who formed their nation as the Third Rome, (6) and the Americans who came from Western European settlement. (7) Since the Turks occupy a portion of the Old Roman Empire, the two remaining nations of Russia and America seem to be the best candidates at the present time. Not coincidentally, both nations are the most powerful military powers on Earth, (8) although a new powerful nation could certainly arise in the future.

The religion of the Eighth King is described in the eleventh chapter of the book of Daniel, in a passage which most Bible scholars believe refers to the "Antichrist." This king will follow a new religion, which was not followed by his ancestors (Da. 11:38). Neither will he follow the god "desired by women," (Da. 11:37), equated with the Babylonian False "Seed of Woman." (9) Instead, he will honor a god of "Ma-Oz," a Hebrew word which means "stronghold" or "strength." (10) However, the King will actually not worship any god, but will exalt himself above them all (Da. 11:37), honoring only the "strength" of the "gods." Thus, the King will be a practitioner of the "Godhood Religion," known today as the "New Age." (11)

The Eighth King will rise to world dominance through war, but whether the King's power comes from the arsenal of Russia or America, or through the "strength" of his new religion, as with the Islamic explosion, we do not know. But Daniel, in his vision of the beast with ten horns, saw that the "little horn" would overthrow three of the Ten Kings (Da. 7:8). This war is also described in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, where the King will invade the Middle Eastern countries of Israel, Egypt, and Libya (Da. 11:41-42). Perhaps as a result of this war, all of the Ten Kings will submit to the Eighth King, (Rev. 17:12,13) bringing Europe and the Mediterranean area under his control.

Once the Eighth King takes power, he will institute a totalitarian government, perhaps following the path of the first New Age ruler, Adolph Hitler. Aspects of his rule are contained in a vision of John about a beast which comes out of the Earth, a picture of the "Antichrist" kingdom. (12) The economy of the kingdom will be totally controlled through the requirement that all who buy or sell must take a mark of submission to the ruler (Rev. 13:16). And those who refuse to follow the new state religion will be subject to the death penalty (Rev. 13:15), just as Christians were when John wrote the Book of Revelation. (13)

Like the Romans in John's day did, the Eighth King will pursue a repressive policy toward the Jews, perhaps emulating the New Age ruler Adolph Hitler in his anti-Semitism. The city of Jerusalem will once more be surrounded by armies (Zech. 12:2), and any Christians in the city should flee as Jesus advised them to do in advance of the Roman siege of 70 A.D. which destroyed the city. (14) This time, the city will be plundered and half of the people will be taken into exile (Zech. 14:2). It will be a time of great distress for the Jewish people (Da. 12:1).

Christians will also not escape from persecution, despite the popular current teaching that the Church will be "raptured" off of the Earth before the "Antichrist" appears. This teaching, which even its proponents admit lacks specific Scriptural support, (15) creates the very real danger that Christians will fail to hear God's instructions such as the admonition to come out of Babylon (Rev. 18:4), as the age draws to a close. To be sure, the Bible does teach that there will be those who do not experience death, but who instead are transformed into their resurrection bodies when Christ returns to Earth (I Cor. 15:51,52). However, this momentous event occurs after the dead in Christ are raised (I Thess 4:16). Since the "first resurrection" occurs after Christ has defeated the "Antichrist" and established His Earthly Kingdom (Rev. 20:5), it should be plain that Christians will live under the rule of the Eighth King, just as they lived under the rule of the Seven Kings who came before. And, as under the persecutions which came before, the Christians will exercise "patient endurance," keeping God's commandments and remaining faithful to Christ (Rev. 14:12).

The Lord, who delights in using His enemies to accomplish His purpose, will deal with Babylon through the Eighth King. For the Godhood Religion will have no more tolerance for the Religion of the False Messiah that it has for the True Religion of the Messiah. The Eighth King will finish the destruction of Babylon begun by Islam and Secularism, burning Babylon with fire and bringing it to ruin (Rev. 17:16). And the city of Rome, the New Babylon (Rev. 17:9) will be destroyed by fire as well (Rev. 18:8). Like the ancient city of Babylon, which disappeared into the desert under God's curse before the first coming of Christ, (16) the New Babylon of Rome will be utterly destroyed before Christ's Second Coming, never to be found again (Rev. 18:21).

Of course, the reign of the Eighth King will also be brought to an end by the Lord after a limited time, described mysteriously as "a time, times, and a half a time," thought to be three and a half years, (17) of oppression of the Christians (Da. 7:25,26). God's city of Jerusalem will once more come under attack by the Eighth King, who will gather the nations to fight against the Jews (Zech. 12:3). The place where the nations gather will be called Armageddon (Rev. 16:16), thought to be the mountain of Megiddo in Israel. (18) It will be at that time of crisis that the Lord returns to the Mount of Olives, just outside Jerusalem (Zech. 14:3). The Eighth King will not retreat from even the Lord Himself, but will attack in full force (Rev. 19:19). However, His army will be stricken with plague and panic (Zech. 14:12,13) and will be destroyed by the Lord (Rev. 19:21), bringing an end to the Eighth King and the long history of the god-kings.

So the King of Kings will triumph over the god-kings, and the survivors from all the nations will return to Jerusalem to worship Christ the King (Ze. 14:16). And the Israelites, whose ancestors had rejected Christ and caused Him to be crucified (Matt. 27:23,24), will "look on Me, the One they have pierced, and will mourn for Him" (Zech. 12:10). Thus will the Israelites and the nations be reconciled to the Lord. The veil of deception will be lifted from their eyes, and they will see the "light of the Gospel and the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4).

But in our present age, as we await the return of the Lord, the veil still remains and the "God of this Age has blinded the minds of unbelievers" (2 Cor. 4:4).

And Babylon, though its political power has already been broken and its doom has been foretold, remains as one of the most dangerous deceptions on Earth.

PART TEN: COMING OUT OF BABYLON

“Then I heard another voice from Heaven say: ‘Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues.’”

Rev. 18:4

Chapter 34

Lifting the Veil

In modern times the most recognizable symbol of Christmas, the day we celebrate the birth of Christ, is a jolly old man dressed in red with a white beard known as Santa Claus. On Christmas Eve, millions of children are told that Old Santa will leave his home at the North Pole, magically visiting the home of every child. He comes down the chimney, carrying his bag of gifts, and leaves presents for good boys and girls under their Christmas trees. And Jesus always seems to be absent when Santa Claus is around.

So once a year, on the old Winter Solstice date of December 25, the world celebrates the birth of the Unconquered Sun, or if you wish, Osiris or Tammuz. (1) Coming from the world dominant North Pole, home of Shang Ti, the Emperor of Heaven, (2) and the Dragon (3) who rules the world, is the Shaman Santa Claus. Mirroring the Shamanistic attributes of the Norse God Odin, a False “Seed of Woman” god, Santa Claus comes down the chimney as a Shamanistic spirit, modeling the Shaman’s journey along the world axis. From his bag, an image of the Northern mythological “Sampo,” or Source of Unlimited Supply, he leaves a present for each child under the Christmas tree, itself also a model of the world axis. (4)

Thus, as the world celebrates Christmas with Santa Claus, it is really celebrating its Babylonian heritage and propensity to worship the False Messiah. Certainly, no adults believe that there is really a Shaman Santa Claus, but the purpose of Babylon is achieved simply by directing attention away from the True Messiah to the Babylonian substitute. And the Secular Religion gets an extra bonus because, as the children grow up and learn that Santa Claus is a myth, they are prepared for the day when their college professors will tell them that Jesus is a myth just like Santa Claus. And another generation has the veil put over their eyes, preventing them from seeing Christ.

Or, perhaps, you prefer the version of the Christmas story which features Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in the starring role. We find that Mary herself was conceived without original sin, a doctrine which the Cult of Mary developed late in Church history. (5) The principal actor in the drama of Christ’s birth was not God or Jesus, but was the Mother Goddess Mary. The famous iconographic picture of her holding the Baby Jesus is, of course, based on the more ancient Babylonian model of Isis and Horus striking the same pose. (6) Even where Mary is shown in her goddess role of protectress, such as the idol of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Christ is shown as a baby in the arms of the powerful Mother Goddess Mary. (7) Thus, the Babylonian tradition

remaining in the Church veils the eyes of its followers by trivializing Christ and redirecting their attention to the Babylonian Mother Goddess, Mary.

A few months after Christmas we celebrate the greatest event in history, the resurrection of Christ, by telling our children about a big bunny rabbit who will bring them colored eggs. The eggs are, of course, part of the ancient Babylonian fertility ritual found from Babylon to the Druids and the Chinese. To further obscure the message, the very name of the celebration is "Easter," an Anglo-Saxon name for the Mother Goddess Ishtar. (8) And, of course, the Mother Goddess Mary is given a prominent role at Easter as "Our Lady of Sorrows," (9) again pushing Christ into the background and veiling the truth of His joyous victory over death.

Death is the subject of yet another modern celebration known as "Halloween." This festival, also known as the Day of the Dead, has no Christian antecedent whatsoever, coming to us straight from the Babylonian Druids. Known to the Druids as Samhain, after the Babylonian sun god "Samas," it was a time for ritual marriage of the king with the mother goddess. (10) It was also the main time when the Druids engaged in human sacrifice. (11) The holiday survives as a celebration of death and evil, adding yet another veil to hide the Gospel of Life and Righteousness from the world.

Instead of looking to God for guidance in such an uncertain world, millions awake each morning to seek out their fortune through the astrological horoscopes printed in their newspapers. (12) And, indeed, the claimed ability to predict the future through the movement of the god-stars has been a staple of Babylon from the beginning, and a coveted source of power. (13) From ancient China, where only the Emperor could use astrology, (14) to Nazi Germany, (15) astrology has been used to provide Babylonian input into governments throughout history. Even today, astrologers and other Babylonian practitioners such as witches and sorcerers are known to have been involved with leaders of countries ranging from Idi Amin's Uganda to Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, and even the United States. (16) Thus, Babylon continues to exert influence over the nations even though the god-kings have been replaced by secular rulers.

Babylonian religions also continue to play a strong role in the nations even though the god-kings are gone. In India, for example, the Hindus are constant opponents of religious freedom, with militants who equal Islamic fundamentalists in ferocity. (17) Buddhism and the old ancestor worship remain as powerful forces in China. (18) And in South America the Babylonian portion of the Catholic Church has consistently moved on rulers to oppose Protestant inroads. (19) Babylon, therefore, remains as a potent spiritual and political force in the world today, using its power to blind the minds of its subjects to the Gospel of Christ.

In the Church, the Babylonian influence remains strong in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches which venerate the Virgin Mary. For even though the theologians and Christians within these churches reject the Cult of Mary and other Babylonian practices, others remain committed to the Babylonian Church. The experience of these Churches is much like that of Israel, having Godly kings and Pagan kings, experiencing periods of revival along with periods of Paganism, and yet always having a remnant who remained faithful to God. The Catholic Church, for example, underwent a significant reform under Pope John XXIII at the Vatican II Council of 1962-1965, as the Church reached out to non-Catholics. (20) Vatican II's acceptance of other Christians as part of the Body of Christ also opened the way for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a powerful Christian force in the Catholic Church. (21)

Yet Christian renewal in the Catholic Church is constantly threatened by the Cult of the Virgin Mary, the Babylonian wing of the Church. In 1950, for example, Marian partisans scored a victory when Pope Pius XII declared Mary to be the "Queen of Heaven," sitting at the right

hand of Christ. The effect of this pronouncement was just as the Babylonians would have wished, causing further division from other Christian denominations and weakening the Christians within the Catholic Church. (22) The current move to name Mary “co-mediatrix” with Christ is even more destructive to Christianity. Thus, while Babylon has made a retreat after the Vatican II Council, it still remains as a potent force in the Catholic Church.

But even among the Protestant Churches, Babylonian forces can be found, not in the worship of Mary or the saints, but in the very fabric of Church operation and worship. For in a great many Protestant Churches, we find that the members look to the pastor to be “spiritual,” hearing from God on their behalf. Some give their pastors veneration not experienced since the Popes of the Middle Ages. This exalted priestly role accorded to pastors is, of course, the very same priestly role separating man from God which opened up the Babylonian deception in the beginning. Thus, Protestants have little reason to scoff at their brothers, the Catholics, for their Babylonian practices.

We all must admit that we live in the ruin of the ancient and evil Babylonian System. It permeates our social institutions, our calendars, our governments, and even into our Churches. Babylon has entered into our traditions, those things we pass from generation to generation, (23) distorting our world view and blinding us, as the Scripture says, to the Gospel of Christ. Even in the Church it is as Jesus said: “You nullify the word of God for the sake of your traditions.” (Matt. 15:6b).

We must also confess that Babylon is in our Churches and societies because it is also in our hearts. The allure of Babylon runs very deep in us, as it did in ancient Babylon and all of the nations which came out of her. Then, as now, Babylon presents a solution to one of the oldest problems of mankind.

For deep down inside, all people know that they are separated from God by their selfish desires and wrongdoings. What Babylon offers is a way to appease God without really changing on the inside. But Babylon’s solution is a counterfeit of the real thing. The only real solution to our separation from God is Jesus.

Only Jesus can set the captives of Babylon free.

Chapter 35

Free from Babylon

The root of Babylon is far deeper than Nimrod’s Babylon, where the Babylonian Religion began. To really understand Babylon’s hold on people, it is necessary to go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, where our first parents Adam and Eve had first broken faith with God.

As soon as Adam and Eve had gained the forbidden knowledge, they sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness (Ge. 3:7). Then, knowing they had sinned, they hid from God because they were afraid (Ge. 3:8). And people have been covering themselves with fig leaves and hiding from God ever since. It was this need in sinful man that was met by the Babylonian System, as the priests and kings devised a religion which would seem to cover the shame of the people while hiding them from actual contact with God.

For people who know they are sinners simply do not want to hear from God. As an example, when God wanted to speak directly in front of the Israelites who were fresh out of Egypt, (Ex. 19:9) but yet who still carried much of Egypt in them (Ex. 32:1), the people begged

Moses not to let God speak directly to them (Ex. 20:19). How much more so did the people of Babylon beg their priests to stand between them and God, a service the priests were glad to provide to increase their power over the people. Thus, the beginning point of Babylon, and the root of its power, comes from the separation of man and God, first by man's sin, and then by man's shame.

But God does not want us to be separated from Him by our sins and our shame. To reconcile us to Him He sent Jesus (2 Cor. 5:18), because He does not want to count men's sins against them (2 Cor. 5:19).

Therefore, as the Apostle Paul says: "Be reconciled to God. God made Him Who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

2 Cor. 20b, 21

In other words, God takes your sins away from you when you come to Christ, not counting your sins against you. Thus, because your sins are no longer counted against you, He takes away your shame, making you righteous in His eyes. You do not need to run and hide from God, because you are counted as righteous. And you do not need to be afraid, because you are His beloved child (Ro. 8:15).

Jesus Christ gives you the power to reconcile with God and destroy your bondage to Babylon which is born from sin, shame, and fear.

As a follower of Christ, there are six steps to become free from Babylon, with each step destroying an aspect of Babylon which may have had power over your life.

Step 1: Seek God for yourself.

Babylon begins with the separation of man and God, and the interjection of a priest or pastor—a mere man—between you and God. But God loves you, just as a parent loves a child (I Jo. 3:1). Can a child and a parent maintain a loving relationship if they must always talk through an intermediary? How about a husband and wife? The answer is obvious. Let no man stand between you and God.

Rather, seek God out for yourself, until you find Him. For we are promised that God rewards those who earnestly seek Him (He. 11:6). God is love, and His perfect love will drive out all of your fear (I Jo. 4:16-18).

Step 2: Let Jesus Christ lead you to God.

Jesus Christ is the real Seed of Woman, the real Messiah, the real God-King, and the real God-Priest. It is through Him that we are reconciled to God (I Cor. 5:18).

"But because of his great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved."

Eph. 2:4,5

To receive God's salvation, you must accept Christ: "If you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Ro. 10:9

And through Christ, we enter God's family: "For through him we have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household."

Eph. 2:18,19

Step 3: Renounce all paths to God other than Jesus
Listen to what Jesus says about Himself:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
Jn. 14:6

Remember on that the very name "Babylon" means "Gateway to the Gods." (1) Babylon offers numerous false "ways" to God: Buddhism, Astrology, Hinduism, Shamanism, and the ancient Pagan religions. Within the Church, the false alternative "ways" are through the Virgin Mary and the "saints." But none of these "ways" will reach God. Actually, God views all of these "alternative" ways in the same way a spouse would view "alternative" spouses—as adultery. (2)

Even so, many have been taught to direct their prayers to the Virgin Mary, so that she will intercede with Christ, or toward this "saint" or that, who is supposed to be a specialist in the problem involved. But hear what Jesus says:

"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my Name...ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."
Jn. 16:23b,24b

So, if you want to ask God for something, forget about the false ways to God. God wants you to ask Him directly, in Jesus' Name, and He will answer you.

Step 4: Worship God with all your heart.
The most important thing we can do is love the Lord, as Jesus says:

"Love the Lord with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."
Matt. 22:37,38

Of course, Babylon, as we have seen, minimizes the role of God the Father, emphasizing the False Messiah and the Mother Goddess. (3) But even in the Christian Churches, the worship of the Father is often ignored.

Suppose, for example, that a young man set out to court his sweetheart in the same way we set out to show our love of God in worship. Once a week, he would arrange a visit to his love. But when he arrived, he would bring his preacher to tell him how wonderful the girl was, and then listen to a choir sing about how wonderful she was. Then, perhaps wiping a tear from his eye, he would leave her, never having spoken a word directly to her or really spending any time alone with her. Sadly, this sort of dry, barren experience is repeated thousands of times every Sunday in the "worship" services of many Churches.

God wants you to have so much more. Suppose the young man in our example decided to spend some quality time with his sweetheart, leaving out the preacher and the choir, but perhaps bringing some romantic music (like a good praise and worship CD in church). Even better, the young man could sing love songs directly to his sweetheart, really expressing his feelings and touching her heart. Here is an opportunity for true love, and, as applied to Church, true worship. Such times of real worship provide a chance for real intimacy with God, as you express your love to God and He, in turn, ministers His love to you.

Try it. You'll like it.

Step 5: Be a temple of the Holy Spirit.

In the Babylonian religion, God, or the gods, could only be found in special "sacred" places. Using the principle of "Sympathetic Magic," the Babylonian priests tried to recreate Heaven, bringing down the spirits of the gods. Examples of these places include the Babylonian Ziggurat, the Egyptian Pyramids, the English Stonehenge, the Minoan Labyrinth, the Mayan Pyramids, and the Temples of Greece and Rome. It was also believed that the spirits of the gods could be brought into statues, thus creating the idols condemned by Scripture.

This Babylonian thinking has also infected the Church, first through Sacramentalism, where the symbolic sacraments are used in a form of ritual magic, and ultimately through the adoration of idols set in the Churches. The great cathedrals themselves became "sacred" places, being used in much the same way as the ancient Babylonian Ziggurat to bring down the spiritual power of the Virgin Mary or some saint. Even the Protestants, who reject the idols and the ritual, are prone to thinking that God can only be met in the "sacred" confines of the Church Sanctuary.

But, in fact, God wants to be with us everywhere we go. He puts His Spirit into us, first to end the control that our sinful nature has over us (Ro. 8:9), then to bring life to our spirits and bodies, and finally to bring us into Sonship with God.

"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"

Ro. 8:15

The "sacred" place where we worship God is in our hearts: "Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord."

Eph. 5:18b,19

As the apostle Paul says: "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you?"

I Cor. 3:16

So God is always with us, because God's Spirit is within us. The "Holy Place" is in our hearts.

Step 6: Seek guidance through prayer.

Life is full of difficult problems, and people are always looking for reassurance and guidance during times of trial. Babylon offers comfort through various forms of divination, or processes designed to find an answer from the gods. Perhaps the most well-known form of

divination is Astrology, where the movements of the stars and planets are “interpreted” to guide the seeker. The ancient Greek Oracle at Delphi relied on the ramblings of intoxicated priestesses, (4) although it has also been suggested that the Persians obtained favorable prophecies through bribery. (5) Other practices include palm reading, tarot cards, fortune telling, and even study of animal organs. These practices may seem like silly superstitions in the age of science, but they are not trivial to God because they involve communion with the demonic realm. To God, it is spiritual adultery. (6)

God is jealous for us because He himself wants to be our guide through life’s difficult problems:

“The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”
Phil.4;5b,6

The Lord compares Himself to a shepherd, who leads his sheep: “He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.”
Jn. 10;3b,4b

So prayer is a conversation with God, with us asking of Him and then listening to Him. God will listen, and God will answer:

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
Ja. 5:16b

God is faithful, and He will answer your prayers.

This, then, is your roadmap to escape from Babylon:
Seek God for yourself—and no one will come between you.
Let Jesus lead you to God—and you will find Him.
Renounce all paths to God other than Jesus—and you will never lose your way to God.
Worship God with all your heart—and you will fall in love with Him.
Be a temple of the Holy Spirit—and He will always be with you.
Seek guidance through prayer—and He will speak to you.

It all comes down to this: You can love God and accept the invitation to join His family, or you can stay with the Prostitute of Babylon.

You can live in righteousness, or you can share the sins of Babylon—sins like murder, theft, deception, oppression, and worst of all, spiritual adultery against a loving God.

You can live a blessed life, or you can share the plagues of Babylon—plagues like warfare, desolation, ignorance, slavery and, worst of all, exclusion from God’s Family.

God has shown you the way out of Babylon.

But it’s up to you to leave the Prostitute.

Listen; please listen, to God’s warning:

“Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues.”

Rev. 18:4

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- 27) Andrews, op. cit., p.234.
- 28) Carr, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

- 29) Keegan, op. cit., pp.366-369.
- 30) Andrews, op. cit., pp.235-236.
- 31) Carr, op. cit., p.14.
- 32) Andrews, op. cit., p.236.
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- 50) Kirchner, op. cit., pp.333-334.
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Chapter 32

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- 2) See Chapters 7 and 11.
- 3) See Chapters 5, 7, and 14 to 17.
- 4) See Chapter 21.
- 5) See Chapters 24 and 25.
- 6) See Chapters 30 and 31.
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- 8) See Chapter 22.
- 9) See Chapter 28.
- 10) See Chapter 30.
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- 3) Ibid, p.1943.
- 4) Shelley, op. cit., p.216.
- 5) LaTourette, op. cit., p.602.
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- 8) Shelley, op. cit., p.428.
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- 10) Strong, op. cit., pp.69 & 87.
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- 18) Ibid, p.1942.

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- 4) Krupp, Beyond the Blue Horizon, op. cit., pp.302-303.
- 5) Griffith, op. cit., p.8.
- 6) Budge, The Gods of the Egyptians, Vol. II, op. cit., pp.220-221.
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- 19) Shelley, op. cit., p.465.
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- 21) Hyatt, op. cit., pp.193-194.
- 22) Pelikan, op. cit., pp.201-205.
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Chapter 35

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- 3) See Chapter V.
- 4) Evslin, op. cit., p.50.
- 5) Olmstead, op.cit., pp.40-41.
- 6) Wagner, op. cit., p.30.

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